

# UNCORRECTED PROOF ISSUE

**Tuesday 23 June 2009 - Estimates Committee B (Bartlett) - Part 1**

## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

### ESTIMATES COMMITTEE B

**Tuesday 23 June 2009**

#### MEMBERS

Mr Dean  
Mr Finch  
Mr Gaffney  
Mr Wing  
Ms Rattray-Wagner (Chair)

#### IN ATTENDANCE

**Hon. David Bartlett MP**, Premier; Minister for Education and Skills

#### **Department of Premier and Cabinet**

**Rhys Edwards**, Secretary  
**Rebekah Burton**, Deputy Secretary  
**Greg Johannes**, Deputy Secretary  
**Philip Foulston**, Director, Executive Division  
**Jeff Reeve**, Director, Corporate Services  
**Peter Wright**, Manager, Finance  
**Tim Bullard**, Director Policy  
**John McCormick**, Director, Policy  
**Mat Healey**, Manager Office of Security and Emergency Management  
**Mellissa Gray**, Director, Social Inclusion  
**Philip Baker**, Acting Director Public Sector Management Office  
**Phillip Hoysted**, Director Tasmanian Together Progress Board  
**Marguerite Scott**, Director, Community Development  
**John Di Falco**, Manager, Employment Policy and Programs

**Wendy Spencer**, Director Tasmanian Climate Change Office  
**Jessie Byrne**, Director Local Government Office

#### **Office of the Governor**

**Anne Parker**, Senior Adviser

**Department of Education**

**John Smyth**, Secretary

**Greg Glass**, Deputy Secretary, Corporate Services

**Jenny Gale**, General Manager, Strategic Policy and Performance

**Sue Kennedy**, Manager, Ministerial and Co-ordination Unit

**Siobhan Gaskell**, Director, Information Service and Community Learning

**Mark Sayer**, General Manager, Skills Tasmania

**Malcolm White**, Chief Executive Officer, TAFE Tasmania

**Tony Luttrell**, General Manager, Corporate Services, TAFE Tasmania

**Nick May**, Director, Finance and Resources

**Belinda McLennan**, CEO, Tasmanian Polytechnic

**Mike Brakey**, CEO, Tasmanian Academy

**Ministerial Staff**

**Sharni Driessen**, Parliamentary Adviser

**Terry McCarthy**, Principal Education Adviser

**Ruth Davidson**, Education Adviser

**House of Assembly Support Services**

**Peter Alcock**, Clerk of the House of Assembly

**Legislative Council Support Services**

**David Pearce**, Clerk of the Legislative Council

**Legislature-General**

**John Menadue**, Manager, Finance

**The committee met at 9.32 a.m.**

**DIVISION 9**

(Department of Premier and Cabinet)

**CHAIR** (Mrs Rattray-Wagner) - Welcome, Premier. I invite you to give an overview for the Department of Premier and Cabinet. We will leave the Education portfolio until later.

**Mr BARTLETT** - I will just go through a brief overview, mainly to explain to the committee some changes in output restructure, some slight changes in portfolio responsibility, major new funding and also the general reductions that the Department of Premier and Cabinet will undergo.

**CHAIR** - I hope you are going to leave me a question, Premier!

**Mr BARTLETT** - I will be very brief and these will just be pointers to these things. In terms of the output restructure, the department's community development outputs have been consolidated under one output - 6.1. This now includes Women Tasmania, the Disability Bureau, the Seniors Bureau, Aboriginal Affairs, Multicultural Tasmania and Children and Youth Affairs. Last year there were seven outputs for each of these. Output 2.5 is no longer required, as we have closed down the Tasmanian Government office in Canberra. Those are the major changes to outputs from last year.

I turn to portfolio responsibilities. Output Group 7 - Development of local government remains the responsibility of Minister Cox as Minister for Local Government, and those Estimates will be dealt with by him, but I will still deal with climate change Estimates, as opposed to the Minister Assisting the Premier on Climate Change.

General indexation - apart from some partial indexation for the negotiated salary increases, the main changes in budgets for the various output groups which comprise DPAC are as follows. There is some new funding: \$1 million for legal costs and other support to establish the National Broadband Network, so that is essentially the project costs of part of the entry into our national broadband rollout; an annual allocation of \$59 000 to maintain a national telepresence network; and also \$298 000 for capital investment in that and essentially that is a very high-end telepresence telecommuting system for future COAG meetings, CAF meetings and ministerial councils. All States are investing in the same system so we will be able to cut travel costs. Every State is committed to this in its budget through the COAG process.

The budget for DPAC also includes \$1.5 million over three years for the Tasmanian Community Transport Trust - and I hope we have more of an opportunity to talk about what that means; \$1 million over four years for supporting Tasmanian volunteers; \$1 million in an emergency relief fund which is essentially to help fund organisations such as the Salvation Army, Anglicare, Centacare, various city missions and so on in emergency relief, particularly during these more difficult times for some families; and \$400 000 over four years for the RSL. There is also a new grant of \$1.05 million for the next three years for the Tasmanian Electronic Commerce Centre, which is essentially our partnership with the university to roll out projects and planning for the broadband project, the first trial of which is the wireless waterfront project that we are running across the Hobart waterfront.

As with all agencies, DPAC has also been subject to substantial cost savings measures, which I am sure the committee would have heard about yesterday from other agencies. These measures include a reduction in management positions, a cut in general travel and vehicle fleet costs, a reduction in advertising expenditure, a reduction in communications expenditure, particularly mobile phone costs, plus a general agency efficiency dividend. These changes resulted in a decrease of \$3.774 million to the bottom line of the operational funding of DPAC.

There were some previous changes to the forward Estimates as well - or previously-agreed changes - for example, last year there was a \$200 000 one-off project for Stronger Councils, Better Services, a one-off IT transformation project of \$500 000, and a \$160 000 project for the Council of Australian Federation. These projects are no longer funded. However, a major project - the Public Sector Health and Wellbeing Program - which only received establishment funding last year, has been increased by \$390 000 this year as we move into the implementation phase.

There have been a few inter-agency transfers, where transfer of \$788 000 for specific social projects such as At School On Time Ready for Work and inter-agency support teams has been transferred out to other agencies. There has been a transfer of funding to DIER of \$95 000 for a forest policy position, and transfer of \$451 000 to various agencies as part of the implementation of the new Service Tasmania funding model. Those transfers were offset by the transfer to DPAC from the Department of Justice of \$112 000 for the two employees who staff the reception and security desk at the Executive Building.

There are some administered payments - I probably don't need to go into great detail about those. There are some good achievements for the year as well around climate change, the appointment of a social inclusion commissioner, support for three COAG meetings and three CAF meetings, which are enormous tasks for the department to coordinate the whole-of-government effort in - briefings, agreements and inter-governmental financial relationships and so on. Disability action plans have now been facilitated by the Disability Bureau for all government departments.

Other achievements include: management negotiation; finalisation of the Tasmanian State Service Award; a new office communication system; a new mobile telephone agreement with Optus - the first time we have had competition in our mobile services; good progress in relation to an IT transformation strategy; development of a grants program for local councils involved in sharing resources; finalisation of the Tasmanian Government Identity and Access Management toolkit; coordination of the reviews of the State Coastal Policy, and the State policy on the Protection of Agricultural Land; progression of a new Service Tasmania procedural information system; and establishment of the Tasmanian Emergency Information Service, which provides single-point contact for government information during and following an emergency, which has proved particularly valuable through the latest swine flu events. That completes my overview.

**CHAIR** - Thank you, Premier. My first question in relation to the overview is that obviously those changes in your department are a tidy-up?

**Mr BARTLETT** - Yes. From year to year there are tidy-ups. I don't think there is an extraordinary number this year. Take, for example, the social inclusion money which was transferred to Education for Kids in Mind and At School On time Ready for Work. These were projects that were, if you like, born out of the Social Inclusion Unit and therefore have been funded and run through DPAC. They were always intended as whole-of-government projects, connected-up government services, but now that those projects are moving into maturity, the funding has been transferred to the agency that is actually running the programs.

**CHAIR** - My next question is: is there any additional funding - and we know from the Budget that there probably isn't - to those departments to support those particular projects.

**Mr BARTLETT** - The \$788 000 is specifically for At School on Time Ready for Work and Kids in Mind Tasmania and is shifted directly to those agencies, so they should be able to maintain those projects where possible and where effective. These projects were pilots to look at what success or otherwise they might have had.

**CHAIR** - And you are absolutely sure that it won't diminish the quality of delivery of the program in any way, shape or form?

**Mr BARTLETT** - Absolutely not. My view of DPAC as Premier and minister for this agency, is that DPAC's role is as conductor of the orchestra, if you like, to bring agencies together to make whole-of-government things happen. But ultimately DPAC is not in the business of delivering educational services - that is the job of the Department of Education. I think it is a proper thing that some of these funds move back to the agencies where those programs are well established and the legwork has been done, and they continue to run them.

**Output group 1**  
**Support for Executive decision making**

**1.1 Strategic policy and advice -**

**CHAIR** - Do any members of the committee have any questions to the Premier on the overview? There are no questions, so I will head into Output Group 1 - Support for Executive Decision Making. Premier, what is your Government's policy of staffing of the ministerial offices? Obviously we would like to know the numbers and how the decisions are made in relation to the quantum of advisers, media people, et cetera is allocated to each office.

**Mr WING** - Ministers or members?

**CHAIR** - Ministers' offices.

[9.45 a.m.]

**Mr BARTLETT** - I can inform the committee that my policy since the onset of the global financial crisis has been to impose a strict vacancy control impact, which has resulted in 10 fewer job across ministerial offices, with a full-year saving of some \$800 000. I have also recently renegotiated the salaries of two former chiefs of staff back to be commensurate with senior heads of office jobs as opposed to chiefs of staff-level jobs. At this point in time my policy is to make savings where possible and where contracts end or are resigned from, they are not being renewed.

In terms of the overall numbers across ministers' offices, the policy is largely based on the need - different ministers have different needs and there is a lot of flexibility that moves people from office to office depending on the portfolio responsibilities. Over the last year a ninth ministerial office has been created. We were operating with eight ministers, but constitutionally we are able to operate with nine and my personal view - and I made the case for it publicly when I made the decision - is that eight ministers plus the Premier taking on a ministerial load is right, just simply because of the workload and the complexity of all the portfolios that we have to cover in Tasmania with a smaller group of people. It would depend as portfolios move around where advisers reside and how many of those advisers are employed in any given office. My very strong view since November - the time of the onset of the global financial crisis - is to not renew any positions, no matter what, and therefore we have had a reduction of 10 staff across ministerial offices.

**CHAIR** - And I am led to believe that there was also a review undertaken by your office in regard to staffing. Has that also contributed to the policy that the Government has at this time?

**Mr BARTLETT** - There was a range of recommendations that resulted from that review, some of which we adopted and some of which we did not. We did not adopt any recommendation that imposed extra cost, for a start. Many recommendations in that report - as if the case with consultants' reports - recommended pay rises here and salary increases there. I did not adopt them

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because I want to reduce the overall cost of ministerial offices and that is the full year saving that I announced yesterday of \$1.1 million. That is made up of some salary reductions, some vacancy control measures right down to and including the fact that we do not have any hired pot plants in the Premier's office now. We have got rid of tea bags and biscuits; we have cancelled three pool cars to the value of \$30 000 a year; we have reduced travel costs by some \$110 000 over the course of the year. All those things add up to a full-year saving of \$1.1 million across ministerial offices and I am intent on doing more than that along the way as well.

Some of those recommendations came out of that report, but the report was largely about the fact that we have inherited a large organisation here and we wanted some independent view of how efficiently that organisation was working, whether it could be improved for efficiency and effectiveness, whether its structures were right around the communications office and around a whole range of structures that have been in place for some years. Some of the recommendations have been adopted; others, where extra costs were involved, have not.

**CHAIR** - As the conductor of the orchestra, as you put it, do the numbers of staff that are required for ministers come directly to you, or do you leave that someone else in your department?

**Mr BARTLETT** - Essentially I, as Premier, would sign royal prerogative contracts. Some staffing, as you know, for individual members would be via the Legislative Council and some via this output. Those contracts are all essentially royal prerogative contracts, which are essentially signed off by the Premier of the day. I have signed very few of those contracts in my time as Premier because largely we have been in vacancy control mode. So most of those contracts would have been signed by former premiers.

**CHAIR** - You have inherited them then?

**Mr BARTLETT** - Largely that is the case.

**CHAIR** - Can I then ask what is the Government's policy on staffing for parliamentary secretaries, and the numbers of parliamentary secretaries?

**Mr BARTLETT** - The ministerial handbook says that it is for the chief of staff to make that decision - it is at that person's discretion effectively. But there has been a common practice over the past 10 years that parliamentary secretaries have had two staffers as opposed to backbenchers having one electorate staffer. I would describe that as common practice, as what has emerged over time, but the handbook actually says that it is at the discretion of the chief of staff.

**CHAIR** - So how many parliamentary secretaries to ministers do we have in Tasmania at the moment?

**Mr BARTLETT** - Just one, that being Heather Butler as parliamentary secretary to me.

**Mr WING** - On the question of travel how will the reduction of \$110 000 be achieved?

**Mr BARTLETT** - I announced yesterday that compared with the same period last year we have saved \$30 000 in MPs' interstate travel costs. That has largely been due to a reduction in trips and travel and looking harder at whether they needed to occur or not. We believe we can save more than that in the coming financial year due to the establishment of this telepresence unit

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that we will be installing in the Executive Building somewhere. That will not only be available to ministers but also to officials. So there will be savings realised from this installation right across the public sector, not just our saving. With every ministerial council that happens or every COAG meeting or every CAF meeting, there is a whole bunch of meetings leading up to them that people like the secretary and others attend. So there will be significant savings through that. We expect more savings than just the \$30 000 we made there. My request to Cabinet that all overseas trips be ended for this year has resulted in a saving of some \$80 000 since January 2009 as well. So the \$80 000 and the \$30 000 add up to \$110 000, but I expect to be able to save more than that in this coming financial year.

**Mr WING** - Are any savings proposed in the class of travel, a reduction from business to economy travel? What is the policy there?

**Mr BARTLETT** - I have advised Cabinet that I do not want Cabinet ministers to be travelling business class except on long-haul flights where there is a requirement to do so because of the nature of the work, and no ministerial advisers are travelling business class.

**Mr WING** - Good. This is not strictly under this item, but does that extend to departmental and agency officials?

**Mr BARTLETT** - With departmental heads I know that there are some contracts across government in which access to business class travel is stipulated as a part of the contractual arrangement. But what I am confident of is that heads of agencies, because they know they need to make travel savings, are discouraging and themselves are not travelling business class, again except on those long-haul flights.

**Mr WING** - That is all good to hear. What savings do you expect under this item of support for ministers by not approving business-class travel except for extended trips?

**Mr BARTLETT** - So far, as I say, it has been \$30 000 since we implemented - well, no, those savings are made up of a number of things. I do not know off the top of my head what the full-year effect of that would be -

**Mr WING** - But that is included in the \$30 000?

**Mr BARTLETT** - At this point in time, but I am confident that the full-year effect of that will be much more significant.

**Mr WING** - Yes, I am very pleased to hear that. Could you supply us with a list of staff of all ministers and the salaries that they are paid?

**Mr BARTLETT** - We would be happy to take that on notice and get it to you by the end of the day.

**Mr WING** - Thank you.

**Mr DEAN** - When was the decision taken to appoint the member for Pembroke - and I think she is still a member at this stage - to the position of Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer?

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**Mr BARTLETT** - The final decision was not taken until the days leading up to budget day effectively. I would say it was under consideration for a few weeks and I would be happy to explain the thought processes.

**Mr DEAN** - If I could be told when it was first considered, when it was first brought up, that that member might be appointed to the position of parliamentary secretary. How long ago was it when it first started?

**Mr BARTLETT** - I could not tell you the exact date of those discussions, but I can tell you what my thought processes were. Ms Ritchie resigned, as you know, from the ministry due to ill health in November, returned to work sometime in January.

**CHAIR** - Yes, 5 January.

**Mr BARTLETT** - During that time on a regular basis I would see her and say, 'How is your health? How are you going?' She would report 'improving,' et cetera. But during that time from January through to budget day I was increasingly aware of the significant workload being carried by the Treasurer. Just to give you an example of that: This is the most complex budget to have been brought down in the most difficult circumstances - in fact, Bruce Felmingham said in 75 years. This has been an enormous workload and there is still an enormous workload to go to implement the Budget. Chairing the Expenditure Review Committee and ensuring that the policies we have put in place are carried out is part of the Treasurer's ongoing role.

But on top of that the Treasurer is Minister for Economic Development and there are, as you would be well aware, due to the global recession a whole range of challenges that we need to face in the coming year as well. So it was my determination leading up to the decision - that he needed some support. My strong view is that nobody should be a parliamentary secretary to a minister from another House. There is no point in having a parliamentary secretary from the lower House supporting a minister in the upper House because that just does not work. Therefore, there were no other candidates because every other member of ours has a job in the upper House. So Allison Ritchie was the only candidate considered. My first thoughts were less about Allison, I suppose, and more about trying to get some support for the Treasurer, and I made the final decision only in the days leading up to budget day.

**Mr DEAN** - I have not listened to the news - I think it has been on the news - when can we expect that new position of parliamentary secretary?

**Mr BARTLETT** - There will not be because there is no other candidate.

**Mr DEAN** - But surely the pressing need is still there.

**Mr BARTLETT** - It is but, as I said, there is no other candidate - unless you are putting your hand up for the job.

**Mr DEAN** - No, but if the pressing need is there and you are saying that you needed to go down this track to ensure that the Treasurer was given the right support - I do not have a problem with that - I cannot quite understand how if the need was there then and at the time of the budget that it is not still there.

**Mr BARTLETT** - It is still there.

**Mr DEAN** - So when can we expect -

**Mr BARTLETT** - There is no other candidate, is there? There is no other member of the Government in the upper House that I could choose to be Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer.

**Mr DEAN** - The other question I have: At the time of the first consideration being given to appointing the member for Pembroke to that position, what was known of the employment situation in her office at that time?

[10.00 a.m.]

**Mr BARTLETT** - As I clearly outlined yesterday, back in November my chief of staff became aware that it appeared Allison had employed her mother. We searched our books for that and could not find it, so then we subsequently came to the Legislative Council. The Clerk of the House assured the chief of staff then that the proper processes had been followed and everything was fine and subsequently wrote to Allison giving exactly that same message. I am happy to read from that letter if you want me to. But essentially what that said to us was that the right process had been followed.

I have a very strict rule - I have made it very clear and I am very happy to go through it here - that I will not be signing any contracts with close family members for my members unless an extremely exhaustive process had been gone through that had shown that no other Tasmanian could possibly do this job. I made that very clear to any member who brought such a contract to me.

**Mr DEAN** - A commendable approach.

**Mr BARTLETT** - Those contracts, as I have clearly signalled, are going to cease now. But any contract that is up for renewal will not be approved on my watch.

Having said all that too, I am not in any way, shape or form casting any aspersions on the advice that the Clerk of the Legislative Council and the President of the Legislative Council gave via the clerk to my chief of staff. I genuinely believe that the clerk and the President were acting in absolutely good faith on the best information available to them at the time. I have no concerns with that at all.

What stirred my concerns was the apparent inconsistencies that were contained in Saturday's newspaper that I certainly did not understand before I read that article. I do not want to put words in the mouths of the President, the clerk or anything, but I imagine quite a few people were surprised by those assertions.

**Mr DEAN** - My other question is on a different line. How many parliamentary offices do we have around this State and where are they?

**Mr BARTLETT** - Every member of the House of Assembly and Legco would have one, but I think some double up. I know there was a shared office between two former members in Kingston for example. There was a shared office between Michael Aird and Lara Giddings in Bridgewater at one stage. I do not know if any Legislative Council - you would not because you

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have separate electorates - but where Legco and lower House electorates overlap, some of our members share.

**Mr WING** - I think Sorell was another one.

**Mr DEAN** - Is it possible to get a list of the number of parliamentary offices around the State and who is paying for the leases, the rents or what have you on those offices?

**Mr BARTLETT** - Yes, we will take that on notice.

**CHAIR** - I am interested to know what the Government's policy is on staffing for other members of Parliament - The member for Windermere has touched on the electorate offices that members of Parliament have - in relation to the services in Hobart for members, for the Leader of the Government and also for opposition parties. Would that be something that you could share with the committee?

**Mr BARTLETT** - Yes, if you want all that detail, I would be happy to get you the detail. Essentially there were changes made following the 2006 election, which I think everyone was aware of, which brought in the concept of officers for all members.

**CHAIR** - One FTE for members.

**Mr BARTLETT** - One FTE for members, access to a car and those sorts of things which came in. That is the current policy.

**CHAIR** - We would appreciate being able to sight those documents at a later stage.

**Mr DEAN** - It has been touched on by you, Madam Chairman, but if I can ask the question again in a different format: What protocols are in place through DPAC for staff appointments; what policy do they have in place?

**Mr BARTLETT** - It depends what you are asking because DPAC is different from ministerial officers of course. Anyone that Rhys as secretary of DPAC employs is a public servant so he would be following the State public sector legislation around merit-based selection and so on. In terms of ministerial officers, selection is made usually by a panel made up of people that the chief of staff would select and they would make the appointment based on the best person for the job as well. Having said that, I have not been through many of those processes as Premier. I have set some new rules particularly around family ties, for example, that have had little opportunity to be implemented because we just have not been employing people. We have been putting people off in fact; we have been doing quite the opposite. The opposition parties, Liberals and Greens, would do exactly the same thing. They select their own staff to staff their offices as well. They would presumably have a process through which they would interview and do what have you.

**CHAIR** - But their funds would come from the Legislature-General?

**Mr BARTLETT** - No, from DPAC as well.

**CHAIR** - Are they allocated a bucket of money so to speak?

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**Mr BARTLETT** - Essentially yes.

**CHAIR** - If they want a very top senior person they might forgo another number downstairs.

**Mr BARTLETT** - Yes, they arrange their own selection, their own processes and so on.

**CHAIR** - Which is highly appropriate.

**Mr BARTLETT** - I believe it is. Those things need good process around them but not a bureaucratic process.

**Mr DEAN** - You mentioned the number of people that you are putting off and not putting them on. That is a part of the redundancy program -

**Mr BARTLETT** - No, these 10 people savings have been achieved through vacancy controls so far - people leaving and not being replaced.

**Mr DEAN** - So I take it there will probably be some further redundancies throughout these departments and these areas?

**Mr BARTLETT** - I am happy to answer you in both cases. In this output, no, I do not see redundancy payments because the royal prerogative of contracts have termination clauses in them. If any contracts were to be terminated they would simply get their entitlements under that contract. But we have achieved these savings, which is \$1.1 million worth of savings, without having to terminate people. We have been doing it by proactively not filling.

**Mr DEAN** - Backfilling vacancies.

**Mr BARTLETT** - That is a different answer if you are asking me in a different output across DPAC as opposed to ministerial support.

**Mr DEAN** - I am having difficulty getting my head around the redundancy situation. Yesterday we were given fairly clear information that it may not necessarily equate to 800 people. It may well be savings in other areas within the departments equivalent to \$60 000-odd for an employee and it saves an employee.

However, on top of that, I am wondering how it is going work because we are told the Government have implemented a number of whole-of-government non-salary savings targets which include: 30 per cent cut in government travel costs; 30 per cent cut in advertising; 10 per cent cut in the Government's car fleet; 20 per cent reduction in mobile phone costs; limiting Senior Executive Service vehicles will be limited to non-prestige vehicles; and salaries of Senior Executive Service officers and heads of agency will be frozen for one year. So the savings that have to be made within the departments to save an employee will have to be on top of those savings I have just referred to?

**Mr BARTLETT** - Yes, you are absolutely right. I think it is useful -

**Mr DEAN** - But it means 800 will go?

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**Mr BARTLETT** - I think it probably does too - that it will be approaching that number. That is why that number is there. But I will give you one example that can ameliorate it as well because it is more than just the savings. Yes, you are right, the more you can save in non-employee costs, the less you have to save in employee costs. But I will give you an example in education. While we are not on that output yet, it is a whole-of-government example. In the education department we have lost through those efficiency dividends - we are doing our fair share - but, on the other hand, through the national partnerships that we have signed with the Federal Government over the last year, we have been the recipient of a whole lot of money. Let us take one, for example, the literacy and numeracy national partnership.

In the department at the moment, imagine a person in that curriculum branch who has skills in literacy and numeracy, who currently is funded by State Treasury but because we have established a national curriculum board through COAG there is lesser need for those officers within that curriculum branch. That curriculum branch person could move to a school or to another part of the department working on the national partnership for literacy and numeracy, be fully funded by that approach - not lose their job, not be made redundant and not have to leave the department. They will still be employed by the department but just funded from a different source, but we would have made our saving that we needed to deliver back to Tasmanian Treasury. What I am trying illustrate here is that there is a whole range of mechanisms that we will be using to meet these savings across agencies, and different agencies will have different capacity to do that.

**Mr WING** - Premier, last year under the item Strategic policy and advice, \$6 679 000 was allocated. That has been reduced by just \$19 000 this year. How is that going to affect the quality and calibre of advice and government strategy?

**Mr BARTLETT** - At this point I might turn to some of the officers here. Essentially the savings in this line would be reflective of an assignment of the overall agency savings to each output group, and what you will find in each output group is that they take in their fair share and the person responsible for that output group would be responsible to the secretary in finding those savings. As I always say, one of the challenges in the smaller States - and I have had this conversation a lot this year with Mike Rann from South Australia, who faces the same challenges - is that the complexity of running government is no less in Tasmania than it is in New South Wales. It's still a complex beast, there are still a whole range of complex policy questions that need responding to, particularly with the aggressive cooperative federalism that Kevin Rudd is running through COAG, where the impost on us in terms of think work and policy work is the same as in New South Wales but they just have the economies of scale to deal with that stuff that we do not necessarily have. But this is a very important part of the agency which does an enormous amount of work just leading up to one COAG meeting to get me there to be able to sign up to things or reject the things we don't want. In terms of managing that from a workload point of view, I might turn to Rhys and ask him talk about what's included in this output.

**Mr WING** - I'd be interested to hear that. Just before he does, you say that this area must take its fair share of reductions, but it doesn't seem as if it is because a \$19 000 reduction in an allocation of over \$6.5 million seems minimal.

**Mr BARTLETT** - Yes; there are some ins and outs here, so let me explain. The decrease to the annual appropriation in this output reflects the transfer of social projects from DPAC to the lead agencies, so that was Kids in Mind and so on that I discussed in the overview. Then there is the impact of the Government's budget management strategies as detailed in chapter 1 of budget

paper 2, so those are two decreases in this output, but there are increases as well. They include provision for establishing the national broadband network; additional funding for the public sector health and wellbeing program, which was in fact announced in last year's budget and we have moved from start-up into action and running that program; and salary increases in accordance with the Tasmanian State Service award as well. So there have been some outs and some ins and that has added up to that figure. That line item does have its fair share of the budget management strategies but it has also had some additions in there to do some new work.

**Mr WING** - Right. Could you please tell us the amount of the reductions and the amount of the increases? You may want to do that later; it may be difficult to calculate that now, but if we could have it some time?

**Mr BARTLETT** - Yes, I think we can.

**CHAIR** - I made a note of \$1 million for the broadband - is that correct?

**Mr EDWARDS** - That is part of the increases and then there is a range of decreases, as we talked about - the travel and so on.

**Mr BARTLETT** - So for example, there's a 40 per cent decrease to travel and transport, a 64 per cent decrease to other supplies and consumables, and a 5.4 per cent decrease to communications, but in consultants - which is listed here and is essentially the national broadband networking \$1 million - there is a \$1 million increase.

**Mr WING** - I see; thank you for that.

[10.15 a.m.]

**Mr BARTLETT** - That will be largely consultancy; legal advice and the legal things we have to do to establish this partnership or joint venture, effectively, with the Commonwealth Government, to roll out what will be essentially our ticket of entry to hundreds of millions of dollars of rollout of broadband.

**Mr WING** - Is it possible to give an indication of how many staff are employed under this item?

**Mr BARTLETT** - I can tell you that salaries and wages have dropped from last year's budget of \$3.086 million to \$2.857 million, a 7.4 per cent drop, so there has been a reduction in the number of people, mainly in the policy division, with 22.5.

**Mr WING** - That is 22.5 staff in the policy division? And who heads that division?

**Mr BARTLETT** - That would be John McCormick and Tim Bullard, who are sitting at the back there.

**Mr WING** - Fine, thank you very much.

**Mr BARTLETT** - And they're fine operators, I might add.

**Mr WING** - No doubt.

*Laughter.*

**CHAIR** - This committee is not questioning their abilities, Premier.

**Mr BARTLETT** - I know, I just don't get many opportunities to tell them they're good blokes, that's all.

*Laughter.*

**CHAIR** - Well, there you are; it's on the public record that they're good blokes. If there are no other questions on this area we will move on to 1.2, which is certainly a much talked-about area, climate change.

## **1.2 Climate change -**

**Mr FINCH** - Premier, I hope you will forgive me if I start with an expression of disappointment and some confusion in respect of climate change, at both a national and State level. Perhaps we could hear from you how you see this present situation of continual non-productive argument, inertia and some public confusion about climate change.

**Mr BARTLETT** - That's a fantastically broad question, Mr Finch, I have to say!

**CHAIR** - And the answer will need to be concise.

*Laughter.*

**Mr BARTLETT** - Well, I'll start at the international level if you like. My views about the international debate about climate change, which deeply impact what we need to do in Tasmania as well, largely related to flaws in the Kyoto Protocol that I think need to be resolved in Copenhagen later in the year, and Australia needs to have a strong voice at that table to make those changes to positively impact what we can do here and to encourage the rest of the world to do the right thing as well. One of those key areas - and I discussed this at length yesterday - is around the treatment of wood, wood products and forestry industries, which I do not believe are accounted for properly in the Kyoto Protocol and therefore, if resolved, will have a significant impact on our climate change efforts here.

At the national level there is of course a debate currently happening in the Senate about two items, one being the carbon pollution reduction scheme - the CPRS - and the other being the MRETs, the mandatory renewable energy targets. The two are of course deeply interlinked, and the one I am most interested in and, I guess, have been lobbying at the COAG level to get on with and get implemented, is the MRETs part of that debate because once the target is set that will allow Tasmania to unlock hundreds of millions of dollars of investment in renewable energies and, let's face it, we are the leading expert in renewable energies in the whole of South-East Asia, in my view. So it will enable us to export our knowledge and build more wind farms and explore other areas such as wave and hot-rock technology and so on, and it will lead to a significant economic gain for Tasmania. In fact, at a meeting of premiers and Professor Ross Garnaut, who of course wrote the report for the Federal Government, Ross Garnaut went around the table to each premier and said, 'You've got these problems in the implementation of this, you've got these and you've got these problems'. He got to me and said, 'It's all up-side for Tasmania; this is

positive for Tasmania', for a whole range of reasons, and that is a good thing. So the application of the new MRETs will be a good thing for Tasmania overall and a good thing economically.

Drilling down to the State view of what we can achieve, the best thing we can achieve of course is to continue to be the leading light in the nation for renewable energies. We currently produce around 70 per cent of the renewable energy in the Australian energy market and if it continues to rain like it did last month we will be able to produce an even higher percentage of that as well. On top of that we have the opportunity to export our knowledge to the rest of the nation and make a contribution to their investment in renewable energy via Hydro Consulting, Hydro, Roaring 40s and so on.

What the Climate Change Unit and the Climate Change Advisory Council need to be focused on is the long-term legislative target that we're putting in place which is the reduction of carbon pollution by 2050 of 60 per cent based on 1990 numbers. Let's put this in context. Tasmania provides 1.3 per cent of all of Australia's carbon emissions or greenhouse gas emissions, and Australia provides 1.3 per cent of world emissions, so by any stretch of the imagination, even before you eliminated it and got to zero, we would still not have had any major impact on world emissions in Tasmania. But we can lead by example and create community knowledge, understanding and partnerships to achieve the goals we've set, and that's what the Climate Change Office within DPAC has been leading.

**Mr FINCH** - Premier, are we being serious enough about this, because in the budget papers we see a continuing decline in the forward Estimates here; in fact, down to less than \$1.2 million in 2012-13. Is that a reflection of us perhaps not doing as much as they are on the international and Federal level?

**Mr BARTLETT** - It is more a reflection, again, of the initial work that we needed to do to get into this game. Two of those bits of work were the Parsons Brinckerhoff audit of all government agencies to look at where we could make savings, and that was an expensive piece of work. The second piece of work is a wedges analysis, which is essentially a look at the economic sectors in our economy that produce greenhouse gases and analysing them as to where they could be reduced and what impacts that might have on our economic circumstances over the next 50 years. Those two bits of work required a significant amount of start-up money to get done but once they're done, that is the knowledge we are working from on our long-term plan and therefore they don't need to be revisited again.

**Mr FINCH** - So what are the State Government's plans to get Tasmanians more involved in combating climate change?

**Mr BARTLETT** - I am happy to talk about my release yesterday of the projects that we invested in, but I'll ask Greg to talk more generally about the holistic view and then I'll talk about some specific projects.

**Mr JOHANNES** - Greg Johannes, Deputy Secretary, Policy, DPAC. We have a Tasmanian Climate Change Office and one of the campaigns it has led which you'd be aware of is the Earn your Stars campaign which was very prominent and you still see the logo out there on 31 buses. That is about encouraging Tasmanians from all walks of life to recognise that they can make a contribution to reducing our greenhouse gas emissions. That has been a very widely disseminated campaign, accessing people across the community. We have also formed the Tasmanian Climate Action Council, which has two members drawn directly from the Tasmanian community through

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a nomination process, and they're establishing a program of work to take climate change out to the local community level and get feedback from people in local communities on their ideas for reducing their greenhouse emissions, adapting to climate change and taking advantage of some of the opportunities that climate change raises for Tasmania. The third major aspect of work is that people from the Climate Change Office are regularly around the State at the community level talking to groups about the challenges of climate change and some of the responses. So there is a very big grassroots effort.

At the funding level, we funded a grants program this year which we will continue to fund next year to enfranchise community action, and I think that's what the Premier is going to discuss.

**Mr BARTLETT** - Some of the projects we're investing in are essentially partnership approaches through grants with organisations outside of government to advance our goals.

**Mr FINCH** - These are incentives to the community?

**Mr BARTLETT** - These are essentially grants to the community. I'll read them out and you'll get a picture of some of them. There is a project called Energy for Change led by Sustainable Living Tasmania; Climate Challenge by the Geeveston Community Centre; and the Sustainable Schools Direct Assistance Initiative led by the Tasmanian Centre for Global Learning. The TCGL is an organisation that goes into schools and runs programs and educates kids and so on in those aspects, so that would be directly into schools. There is also Working it out Together, a community-based approach to reducing greenhouse emissions by Eco Tasmania; Simple and Sustainable Energy Conservation in Residential Aged Care Facilities led by Southern Cross Care Tasmania; Rural Rides led by Sustainable Living Tasmania; Implementing Emissions and Energy Reductions for Tasmanian Agriculture led by Northern Tasmanian Natural Resource Management Association; Art Bike Sharing Project - I really need to find out what this one's about because it sounds interesting - led by Contemporary Art Services Tasmania; the Kettering Energy Efficiency Project led by the Kettering Cricket Club; and Problems to Resources led by the Mersey NRM group. So they are all grants that have been awarded recently for projects.

**Mr FINCH** - What size are those grants, Premier? Just give us some idea.

**Mr BARTLETT** - It is \$400 000 in total, so they're not huge grants but they're things that these organisations would be bringing their own resources to as well. On top of that, over the past year the climate change group has introduced legislation, the Climate Change (State Action) Act, that you would be well aware of, and has implemented the framework for reducing Tasmanian government greenhouse gas emissions. It has commissioned the wedges analysis of the Tasmanian economy, an approach that has been used globally to identify the most effective emission reduction measures within an economy to achieve a set target; and has established the Tasmanian Climate Action Council and so on over the year.

**Mr FINCH** - Can you tell us about future State plans to give Tasmanian incentives to perhaps generate solar electricity and then sell that back to the grid? Any plans?

**Mr BARTLETT** - Yes, but I'm afraid that's something you'd have to ask the Minister for Energy about. There is a national approach to feeding tariffs or what-have-you, and that is being worked through.

**Mr JOHANNES** - I guess the primary mechanism for providing incentives for the installation of domestic renewable energy supply will be the MRET scheme that the Premier referred to which will establish a target of 20 per cent of Australia's energy being generated from renewable sources by 2020, and as part of that it will give a disproportionate amount of credit, by way of example, to energy generated from domestic solar panels. So that will certainly be the principal mechanism in the Australian market for subsidising or providing incentives for the average person in the average house to install something for renewable energy generation.

**Mr FINCH** - Thank you. Premier, can you assure the people of Tasmania that you're satisfied that your Government is doing enough in respect to the threat of climate change?

[10.30 a.m.]

**Mr BARTLETT** - Yes, but I would add to that that unless the major emitters in the world also do enough, the effects of climate change aren't going to be mitigated by the actions of the Tasmanian Government. Having said that, a lot of the research also shows that the effects of climate change are also about opportunity for Tasmania, opportunity in research, where we are proximate to the Southern Ocean and the Antarctic and we have significant skills in that style of research. There are opportunities, particularly following on from the idea that Tasmania can be a food bowl for the rest of the nation as the Murray-Darling continues to dry up with no long-term solution in sight. Tasmania has an enormous opportunity with 12 per cent of all of Australia's rainfall falling on 1 per cent of its land mass - Tasmania. Hydro Tasmania is the largest manager of water resources in south-east Asia, and the irrigation board that we have now established is investing in some 30 key irrigation projects to the value of \$400 million. We have an enormous opportunity here to rapidly increase our productive value of primary industries and, more to the point, I think, downstream processing and value adding in those industries.

One example been given to me by a scientist at the cooperative research centre on climate change was around the research they were doing to show that for Tasmania as a wine-growing region, our climatic change over the next 50 years will be significantly less than for every other major wine-growing region in the world. As other wine-growing regions, particularly the ones in the warmer climates, actually warm up, they will be unable to continue to produce the grapes. If you were a world investor at the moment wanting to invest in hectares of grapes, Tasmania would be a very good place to do it, because already we are in the cool climate lines for a start. We can afford the temperature to go up and still be in cool climate lines, but the differential in climate change here will be significantly less than every other wine-growing region in the world, maybe with the exception of New Zealand.

**Mr FINCH** - Just a final question, Mr Premier, in respect of the office, I am just curious as to where it is housed and what sort of numbers are in the office?

**Mr BARTLETT** - It is in the Executive Building. It is run very competently by Wendy Spencer, who is sitting behind here. There are five people within that office.

**Mr FINCH** - Any likelihood that there would be a reduction in staff because of the contribution needed to be made to the economy?

**Mr BARTLETT** - The complement is 5.8 FTEs. As of May it was five, because one senior adviser is on maternity leave, or leave without pay following maternity leave.

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**Mr GAFFNEY** - The local councils are often the mainstay of climate change initiatives and audits coming from either State or Federal governments. As you would well know, recently there was a climate change conference largely coordinated by local government staff. Unfortunately, the funding for that position has decreased because it was a national initiative some eight months ago, and the shortfall was taken out of LGAT reserves. So local councils are often the people who have to instigate the decisions made from above about how it will affect communities. You would be aware of Clarence's national project with climate change. Would it be the intent of the Climate Change Office to take over some of those roles and responsibilities? There is already a network there within local government which should not be diminished just because we do not have a resource. That would be a handy role for the Climate Change Office to step into to fulfil that position?

**Mr BARTLETT** - Yes, as you are obviously aware also - other members may not be - we have a climate change partnership with LGAT, and it is probably something we can deal with through there. But I would be happy for Greg to expand on that.

**Mr JOHANNES** - As I said in response to an earlier question, the Climate Change Office is active across the community and all local council areas. There is a formal partnership agreement under the auspice of PLGC with local government, and the Climate Change Office has funding within its budget for a certain number of partnership projects throughout the year, responding to opportunities, in particular local council areas.

The other major initiative that the Climate Change Office and the Government are involved in which is highly relevant to local government is the work on the climate futures project. The climate futures project is a three-year project in which the Government is investing around \$500,000 per year in partnership with Hydro Tasmania and the Antarctic Climate and Ecosystems Cooperative Research Centre. The real purpose of that project is to provide very fine level modelling detail to predict the specific impact of climate change in terms of rainfall patterns, extreme weather events and wind velocity in small pockets of Tasmania across the State, so that the Climate Change Office and the Government are able to support local government decision making in the future by saying that within a particular municipality this is what the modelling suggests climate change will mean specifically for that area and, by extension, the particular industries and communities that are active in that region. Currently, all we are able to do is rely on very coarse grain modelling which says that Tasmania broadly might look a certain way in future, which is not particularly helpful, because we know that there will be strong regional differences.

That will be the key emphasis over the next couple of years - working in partnership with local government under the auspice of the PLGC, funding, in some cases, specific projects in specific regions based on the opportunities that arise, continuing the climate action fund that the Premier spoke about, which will be another source of funding for particular community groups as opposed to local government, but also providing the information to counsels across the State to inform their decision making on climate change going forward so that they do not have to individually spend, in most cases, what would be many hundreds of thousands of dollars independently contracting that work themselves.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - That is very good. Further to that, were local councils involved with the projects that were discussed beforehand from these groups? Will local councils actually have any inputs, because I sometimes find one organisation may be given some funding for a project when, if local councils were involved they could say, 'Look, that's a really good project, but we have this

other group over here that have been working for much longer and much harder with much greater outcomes than this group.' I am just wondering what connectivity there has been between the giving out of funds for projects within communities and whether that is going to be addressed into the future?

**Mr JOHANNES** - I do not believe in the first round that local government was formally involved in the decision-making process around that grants program. Certainly, there is an opportunity moving forward through the partnership with LGAT to involve them more formally. I take what you say, because certainly that was the experience that I had in economic development - that is, quite often there was value in consulting directly with local government before a grant was awarded to get a feel for the lay of the land. That is certainly something we can look at going forward.

We have the Tasmanian Climate Action Council, a community represented in the form of Nel Smit and Nel sits on the decision-making body around this particular grants program, so we would be relying on Nel to provide some of the local community links going forward. That is certainly something we can look at.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - Thanks for that, because now that we do not have an officer at LGAT level to actually do that work to synthesise through, it is really going to be handy if the office can take on board that responsibility, which would help local government out.

**Mr WING** - Madam Chair, and I want to preface my question with a comment. Mr Premier, last year you may recall that I wrote to you making suggestions about some energy saving measures that I had experienced as well as recycling. In your reply, you were very positive and kindly sent me a copy of the DPAC carbon emission reduction plan. I was very impressed to read that. I am just wondering if you would be good enough to give us an indication of what has been implemented in that plan and to what effect.

**Mr BARTLETT** - DPAC emitted 2 171 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>, representing 2 per cent of emissions from Tasmanian government agencies. Some 68 per cent of DPAC's emissions were sourced from energy, being the transport sector - that is cars, I would imagine. Emissions from energy and the transport sector were primarily derived from the combination of fleet and departmental vehicles, with a relatively high use of taxis and higher vehicles compared to other departments. Emissions from the energy station resources sector accounted for 29 per cent of the total. The waste sector percentage was relatively low at 3 per cent as an indicator of a smaller department effectively. That is probably a per capita assignment of that. The DPAC carbon emission reduction plan was revised in January '09. Is that the one I sent you?

**Mr WING** - This was in August 2008.

**Mr BARTLETT** - So it has been revised to incorporate the findings of the audit, the Parsons Brinckerhoff inventory project, which measured the Tasmanian Government's greenhouse gas emissions. The inventory indicated that the department's total emission levels are about average compared with other agencies and that the main areas for attention are reducing emissions from vehicles and electricity. That is why you will see - I do not have my pedometer on me today - the Director of the Climate Change Office with her pedometer on, because we are making them walk everywhere. If you shake them, it adds steps. You attach it to your dog's collar as well. We are also investing in cycle ways, of course, which is a very important part of this. I can report also

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that my team in the global corporate challenge is coming last, unfortunately. The rest of them are letting me down!

The revised plan has some additional actions to help achieve aims. The department aims to reduce its emissions from travel and energy by 3 per cent over the coming 12 months. We have some additional actions to achieve this target. We will develop a transport plan which specifies measures for reducing transport-related emissions. I rather suggest this may be overtaken by the cost driver of reducing transport this year as well. Of course, inevitably, that will lead to lower emissions also. We will undertake an office-by-office audit of travel activities, assess the energy ratings of all new electronic and electrical equipment that comes in. Since the plan was released, the department has drafted a communications strategy to raise awareness through the department and change behaviour. It has investigated energy-efficient lighting options for the executive building and undertaken assessments of alternative lighting options for major offices. It has set up a departmental climate change working group to champion carbon emission reduction practice, reduced the number of vehicles in the car fleet and is also implementing desk top videoconferencing. Pretty much everyone in the department - except for me, because I have got a Mac - now has on-the-desk videoconferencing facilities straight off their own computer. That is part of the IT transformation project. Rather than travel, they are able to do more of that. Also, the initiative here, of course, is investing in the COAG telepresence project, which will enable more and more ministers and offices to not travel but to meet with their interstate counterparts via very high-end videoconferencing.

**Mr WING** - That is good news. In the program that you sent me, it provided for the installation of sensor lighting in the Executive Building at an estimated cost of \$150 000. Has that been installed?

**Mr BARTLETT** - That is still under investigation, I am told, Mr Wing.

**Mr WING** - I see. Now, is it possible for this type of program that you have adopted in DPAC to be extended to all government departments and agencies and instrumentalities?

**Mr BARTLETT** - Essentially all agencies, following the Parsons Brinckerhoff audit would have all that data and their own plans. Greg might like to talk more about them, but I know there is one in education, certainly.

**Mr WING** - In Henty House, for example, there are only about two or three sections, the Legislative Council being one of them, that has any provision for recycling. The information I have is from the cleaners. That is very authoritative.

**Mr BARTLETT** - We have seen some authoritative cleaners in these parts!

**Mr WING** - High-class ones in Henty House. So, I took this up with the management committee of Henty House, because lights I had seen being left on at weekends and at 10.30 at night -

**Mr BARTLETT** - Who is the building manager at Henty House? Do we rent that? Does DPAC rent that?

**Mr WING** - There has been an improvement in that. I think Treasury own the building.

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**CHAIR** - They might get a fine.

**Mr WING** - I would like to see a program of recycling. I sent you a photograph that I took -

**Mr BARTLETT** - Yes, I remember.

**Mr WING** - It is of Parliament House in Scotland where there were bins for glass and magazines, papers, et cetera. I would like to see something like that in all government offices.

**Mr BARTLETT** - Yes.

[10.45 a.m.]

**Mr WING** - I must say, my colleagues here in the Legislative Council in the main have adopted a policy of turning the lights out in their offices -

**Mr BARTLETT** - In the main, come on, name names, Mr Wing. Who is not switching their lights off?

**Mr WING** - I think all that I have seen are doing that as a regular practice now.

**CHAIR** - Thank you.

**Mr WING** - I think this is an important matter. I do not want to be hurried on this.

**CHAIR** - I appreciate that, but we need a question.

**Mr WING** - If this could be extended to Government agencies, conserving lights and power and paper and recycling and if facilities could be put in place, there would be significant savings. I was sitting opposite a gentleman who has a business of consulting in energy saving, Mr Robert Dutton. He told me that the saving in being economical with lighting is usually about 20 per cent. That would be significant, if that were applied to all government departments.

**CHAIR** - Thank you, Mr Wing.

**Mr WING** - Thank you for your indulgence, Madam Chair and Mr Premier.

**CHAIR** - I am being very kind this morning. It may not last.

**Mr BARTLETT** - Greg might want to just add a little bit to that.

**CHAIR** - Very short, thank you.

**Mr JOHANNES** - Every agency is required by government to have an emissions reduction plan which identifies the greatest opportunities for savings. Through the Climate Change Office, we are coordinating a champions working group, which has got working level representatives from across every agency to share best practice and to put forward these sorts of approaches to encourage every agency to take them up.

**Mr WING** - Can we expect to see some type of bins available for recycling in government departments?

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**Mr BARTLETT** - We have got them through DPAC, I am informed, and Economic Development. At least some agencies have them.

**Mr WING** - If we could pursue it with the other ones with the Climate Change Office. Could that take that up?

**Mr JOHANNES** - We can encourage another agency to take that up as an initiative, but, of course, it is up to the agency to identify where the greatest -

**Mr BARTLETT** - I can assure you that any agency I have responsibility for will implement that.

**Mr WING** - And a whole-of-government approach on that would be very beneficial, I think. Thank you, Mr Premier.

**CHAIR** - Mr Dean, final question on this area.

**Mr DEAN** - Obviously there is a close working partnership between the office and UTas. They are obviously a big player in this whole thing. My question goes a bit more to the member for Mersey's question about working with local government. I raise the issue of the cycle ways and the cycle paths and the desire of some councils now to get rid of vehicles from the hub of their main areas and so on and make them more pedestrian-friendly. I am just wondering how closely your office is working with councils in relation to the cycle path issue? There is State Government funding of \$4 million over four years. Do we have enough funding in that area? That is a critical part, I think, of moving forward in this area. Just how close are we -

**Mr BARTLETT** - I will answer about the money if you like, and maybe I will hand the first question back to Greg. The cycle ways project is being run out of the Sport and Recreation Tasmania, but, you are absolutely right, it has a clear climate change benefit, a clear health and wellbeing benefit, and a clear infrastructure costs benefit in term of maintaining roads and wear and tear and all those sorts of things. It ticks all the boxes. One of the first things I did as Premier was put \$4 million into last year's Budget for matching funds for local government. I am absolutely thrilled with the success of it and with the positive and proactive response from local government right across Tasmania, all over the State. I know Launceston has its cycle plan now, and we are very keen to match dollar for dollar with councils involved in Greater Launceston in that plan, as we have done with Greater Hobart, as we have done on the north west coast.

I can see that \$4 million is just the start, and I want to invest much more than that in cycling infrastructure across Tasmania over the coming years. The take-up rate has been superb. We have not run out of the money yet, so we are going fine at the moment. But I expect that we will, and that we will want to do more after that.

In terms of cycling, the data shows - I do not have it exactly - that if you invest \$4 million in cycle ways and you take just 90 cars off the roads per year, you will save more in terms of climate change than you would investing that \$4 million in solar panels, for example, and reducing your energy costs. So all of these things are a balancing act between what you do, but, certainly, I can assure you that any government I lead will invest in cycling infrastructure in larger measure than ever before in Tasmania.

So this bike project will facilitate and encourage sustainable transport by providing free cycling options to the public to travel between public and not-for-profit galleries in the Greater Hobart area. The project will construct a series of bike hubs around the area and set up a bike lending structure to allow visitors and residents to borrow bikes for free from a series of access points between galleries. It is a really neat little idea where you might be at the TMAG and might want to get down to a gallery in Salamanca and you will be able to hop on a bike and ride around. With more cycle ways and so on, I am sure that is a project that is totally transferable to Launceston or Burnie or what have you. The first question related to UTas, and Greg will comment on that.

**Mr JOHANNES** - Of course, the State has a partnership agreement with the University of Tasmania, signed by the Premier. It identifies five or six priority areas for the forthcoming three years. One of those priority areas in the existing agreement is climate change. We have a committee that is co-populated by senior university researchers and senior bureaucrats to identify opportunities for collaboration. A couple of recent examples are some collaborative work to look at the impact on reducing emissions by investing in better insulation, particularly in public housing, and another piece of ongoing work that we are doing in partnership with the university and Greening Australia is to look at what Tasmanian plant types can offer in terms of sequestering carbon for a planting program out in the Derwent Valley. There is ongoing collaboration and a very close relationship with the university on climate change issues.

**CHAIR** - Thank you. If there are no other questions on that very important area, I will move on to social inclusion.

### **1.3 Social inclusion -**

**Mr GAFFNEY** - Premier, there has been great interest in the Government's initiative of the Social Inclusion Unit. We would find it advantageous to hear about its role, its goals and the benefits to the Tasmanian community. There has been some media attention - some of it unfairly targeted - towards the Social Inclusion Unit. It would be fair to say that the general public does not seem very well informed about the Social Inclusion Unit and what its role is and what it is going to achieve. Perhaps you could give us a bit of a breakdown for 2008-09, because it is a significant amount of money.

**Mr BARTLETT** - It is. I guess it is one of those things, and I think you hit the nail on the head there. One of the problems with a term like 'social inclusion' is it sounds a bit bureaucratic. It sounds a bit Orwellian -

**CHAIR** - Warm and fuzzy.

**Mr BARTLETT** - Or the opposite, in some ways, I am not sure. Therefore, what is important about social inclusion is its manifestation in what you actually do in communities to achieve outcomes towards social inclusion. In some ways, what we need to do as policy makers is tie the policy term of social inclusion to the actual action on the ground. There is plenty of action on the ground. I think, unfairly, there was some criticism recently in the media that that had not been the case. But I am absolutely convinced there is.

The Social Inclusion Unit's primary job over this year is to develop a social inclusion plan, of course, but also to start implementing it. As you know, we have appointed Professor David Adams as the Social Inclusion Commissioner. He held a similar role - not the same role, but a

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similar role - in Victoria, and he brings with him a wealth of knowledge and ideas about connecting up government services and connecting up communities. To me, when I talk about connectedness, I am talking about connecting up communities to each other, to themselves and connecting up government services to those communities most in need.

I can give you an example in a policy sense in what we are doing in this area and some of the things that the Social Inclusion Unit have been involved in conducting the orchestra, because these are things that will be delivered by line agencies eventually. That is part of the problem in explaining the story. The Social Inclusion Unit is the conductor of the orchestra and does develop good policy, but, ultimately, at the end of the day, it will be education, health, police and other government agencies that police new services and different things.

We have completed now the consultations and the data work as the evidence base for developing the social inclusion strategy. I expect that in the next month or so we will be releasing that full social inclusion strategy. But, in the interim, leading up to that, we have been getting on and doing some work. When I talk about connected government services, I am talking about things like our learning information network centres, five of which we are building around the State from Scottsdale to George Town to Sorell based on the very successful Huonville model. Our child and family centres, the construction of which will start this year, one at East Devonport and a number of other places, are about social inclusion. They are about taking government services into least advantaged areas and connecting up government and non-government services in a one-stop-shop style.

But also an initiative in this Budget, which is clearly about social inclusion, is the Community Transport Trust funded to the tune of \$1.5 million. Now, everyone who has ever been a member of this Parliament and local government or a representative of people knows - certainly the social inclusion consultation proved this very clearly - that transport - whether that is getting senior citizens out of their homes to the bowls club or the senior citizens clubs or eating with friends, whether that is getting the kids from Avoca primary to an excursion so that they can see the Scienceworks at Launceston or whether that is getting people who are displaced from work in Scottsdale to other opportunities for employment or whether that is the neighbourhood house having a Tarago to take people to social or economic opportunity things - is one of the major factors in social exclusion in Tasmania. I am sure all of you have dealt with many, many community groups saying that they just need access to transport and that will solve many of the problems.

The Community Transport Trust is a real attempt - I believe it will be very successful - to achieve some solutions here. What the Community Transport Trust will do is provide access in a town like Scottsdale, for example, that might have local government, might have a school, might have a senior citizens club, might have a neighbourhood house, all of which have transport needs. They will be able to come together and say that their needs could be met through some volunteerism, which there always is, and some cost apportionment from local government or users - for example, the school kid pays 50 cents to get on the bus to go to the excursion. What the Government will provide is the vehicles. If local communities can find solutions through governments and sustainability, effectively we will give them all the vehicles that they want, whether that is two Taragos or a bus or three cars or whatever the case may be. The Community Transport Trust will deliver on that. That is a very clear social inclusion initiative that has been worked up and developed and delivered by the Social Inclusion Unit over recent months since I announced my intention -

**CHAIR** - Premier, can I just butt in there?

**Mr BARTLETT** - Sure.

**CHAIR** - It is a fantastic policy, but I also note that you said that these will actually start off in the Social Inclusion Unit, but they will probably end up in departments. Can I put it to you, Premier, that that is where some of the issues arise for community groups, when they get sent back to a department and then they do not fit under the straight-down-the-line rules. It all goes a bit pear shaped for communities then. How can we as a group of representatives of the community know that it is going to stay where it belongs in the first place?

[11.00 a.m.]

**Mr BARTLETT** - Absolutely. Something like the Tasmanian Community Transport Trust is essentially a grants program, it is a simple mechanism, but with some new ideas around what that money can go for and how it will go. It essentially buys vehicles for people. We are looking at a number of mechanisms, including things like the Tasmanian Community Fund to simply administer this fund for us. They get a lot of applications for vehicles, so we can augment with them different bits and pieces.

But, if you take an early bit of work of the Social Inclusion Unit, which was working with the Department of Education on a literacy plan for Tasmania, what came out of that was \$36 million invested in Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap, which is our literacy program in high-needs schools effectively. It is having a real impact, and I am happy to talk about that in the education part. I should introduce Mel Gray, Director, Social Inclusion. There is no reason why Mel's unit should be running an education literacy program. That should be teachers in schools running that program. So that is how I am trying to describe to you that while they might be some of the intellectual and research grants and working together with agencies to develop innovative, good, socially inclusive policy, at the end of the day it is Education that has to deliver a literacy program based on the evidence and data and research. So it is horses for courses, I think.

**CHAIR** - But as long as what is available initially to provide that community transport stays as it is, and once it gets to a department, the rules do not change, and then it does not fit with the guidelines. Of course, there is an issue about the funding, continued funding, of the bus, for instance, because it does not fit under the guidelines because they do a social event that is not perceived by the department as being acceptable.

**Mr BARTLETT** - I absolutely agree with you. The thinking in my mind around things like the child and family centres, the LINC's, the integrated care centres and gateway services and those sorts of things is about simplifying them. When I was a backbencher I always described my job as a navigator of government for my constituents. You know this very well. They come to you, they do not even know if it is local government or Federal government or State government, let alone which department it is that they want to deal with. You all know this. So our jobs are navigators of government. So out of that learning that I did in that period comes things like the child and family centres, where what we really need to be doing is taking all those services that are sometimes delivered in the city buildings, sometimes delivered in a hospital, sometimes delivered in a school, sometimes delivered in a child health nurse centre or what-have-you, and put them in one place, so that a young mother knows that if she takes her young child to this area, she can get advice on nutrition, she can get access to her community members, she can get access to the sort of neighbourhood house-style things and services, non-government organisations,

maybe some emergency relief, and certainly to early years education and preschool education. That is the idea behind a child and family centre.

At the other end of the spectrum, the idea behind a learning information network and the LINC's based on the Huonville model - we are committed to building another five - is also around the adult end of that spectrum and where adults go to get their adult education, their vocational education, their library information, online access, their Centrelink, their Service Tasmania. They should all be under one roof. So, it is very much about simplifying things so that the punter in the street does not need to know he needs to go to the Department of Education to do a certain thing. When you hear me talking about connected up government services, that is what I am talking about - bringing those government and non-government services together so that they are seamless for Tasmanians. Absolutely, I agree with you, and that is our strategy for achieving that outcome.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - I notice that an extra \$1.5 million is put into the 2009-10 Budget for the Emergency Relief Fund and community transport, which you have spoken about, and the volunteering fund, which I think is good.

**Mr BARTLETT** - They are all related to social inclusion, as well, of course. So the Emergency Relief Fund effectively is about saying that if people do not have food to feed their families, they cannot be socially included. So the Emergency Relief Fund will flow directly. This is effectively DPAC - my agency is acting as a post box for this money. This money will flow directly without clipping the ticket through to Anglicare, the Salvos and so on.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - So my question is that I notice in the following years - 2010-11 and 2011-12 - it goes back to the \$3 million mark. So running the Social Inclusion Unit is about being involved. Would it be the intent of the Government when it sees an area that needed improvement or some special attention, it would make available some funds to do that and then once it has been passed on or figured out and then passed on to a more effective agency, is that how you see that working?

**Mr BARTLETT** - What I see is that the salaries and the wages of the unit will roughly flat-line. They will have their efficiency dividend to deliver as well, I am sure, but it will roughly flat-line. These projects of which you talk, the \$1 million for volunteering, \$1.5 for the Community Transport Trust and \$1 million for emergency relief, are all things that will fit in with the social inclusion plan that we are developing and which will be released in the next month. As other initiatives need to be funded through that, yes, I see this as the post box, if you like, for those initiatives as well. So over the years, its budget will fluctuate a bit. We may, in the following year, provide another \$1 million for emergency relief. This is the first time, by the way, that any State Government has provided money for the Emergency Relief Fund. It is usually federally funded, and we want to top it up this year for Tasmanians, particularly going through the global recession. Now, if that need is less next year, we probably will not put another \$1 million in there. If it is still there, we will put \$1 million in. So, yes, it will fluctuate; it will go up and down.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - So, therefore, the Social Inclusion Unit is a long-term strategy, even though we agree the name is not there.

**Mr BARTLETT** - It is not what we would go out to a community with and say, 'This is your social inclusion bus that you are applying for or your social inclusion Emergency Relief Fund.' This is a bit of public policy.

**CHAIR** - It is called the Dorset Road, I think.

**Mr BARTLETT** - That is exactly what it is called, and that is where it is coming from, I think.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - I have to say, that same term is one of the four social policy goals put forward by the Australian Local Government Association because they could not come up with a better one. So it is already ingrained.

**Mr BARTLETT** - I do not doubt that at government and public policy level we understand what that means. But I do not expect the neighbourhood house at Scottsdale or Latrobe or whatever to be talking in that language. We want them talking in language that people will understand.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - The last question is about connecting that through media with what are going to be the outcomes. That is going to be really important, because there is some confusion, and I think if you highlight in those terms, my community would be more satisfied with the fact that, 'Okay, now we see what it is going to do. Now we see its role.'

**Mr BARTLETT** - I had a meeting just last week with the director and talked about our communications plan over the next six months as the Social Inclusion Director hands us a strategy, and I can go through some of the aspects of that strategy if you are interested in it before he hands it to me -

**CHAIR** - Mindful, Premier, of the tea without the biscuits.

**Mr BARTLETT** - You can afford biscuits up here, still. So the strategic priorities of the social inclusion plan will be: emergency relief - this is sort of a hierarchy working up, if you like; service delivery, so front-line skills for staff; financial inclusion, so that might be social enterprises, microfinance, economic participation; intergenerational disadvantage, which is things like LINC's and child and family centres, early years and adult and community literacy; volunteering, which we are obviously starting to invest in already, because volunteering is a pathway to social inclusion; support and access, which is community transport, leveraging broadband capability and so on; planning reforms, and David Adams put to me this fantastic idea about pram-walking distance and that we should be planning our communities around pram-walking distance so that no young mother finds herself socially excluded because she cannot push her pram to the service that she needs to get. So pram-walking distance is a very important concept in planning for our communities in the future. There are things like that that will come about. There is also: local capacity buildings, which is investing in your neighbourhood houses and other institutions that exist; place-based services, which is what I talk about when I say the eight child and family centres, the first eight - we are going to build 30 of these over the next four years - are directly targeted to the places of least advantaged communities in Tasmania, and the next eight will be the next eight least advantaged communities; enabling legislation so that we are setting these things in stone so that they happen with future governments as well.

## UNCORRECTED PROOF ISSUE

That is essentially the guts of what the social inclusion strategy will be, and we will, over the next six months, spend a lot of time - you will hear me and others at forums - talking about translating that into what it means on the ground for communities.

**Mr DEAN** - This is an interesting area, because it impacts more in some areas than it does others. My electorate is a good example as almost every low socioeconomic group falls within my electorate in Launceston. So, I have difficulty at times of understanding the areas we are targeting to try and get this right in the first instance. It seems to me that we have difficulty with Metro from time to time. You have talked about transport problems and so on, and Ravenswood is a good example. The community does not seem to want to become involved in the provision of transport, and they are more concentrating on getting the right numbers in their buses. I am just wondering where we were going with that. The other thing I wanted to ask about what is the Smart Kids, Strong Futures program, of which your office would have a copy of. I want to know where we are going with that.

**Mr BARTLETT** - I have not read it myself, I have got to say, but I will.

**Mr DEAN** - It was forwarded to your office, but it was obviously seen by a staffer. I want to know just what we are doing in some of those northern suburbs in Launceston to get the social inclusion thing right. The northern suburbs community centre is another good example. It is working its butt off to try to involve the community and so on.

**Mr BARTLETT** - Will you ever see the Social Inclusion Unit marching into town? That will not happen. It is about creating better public policy to support exactly the work that you are doing up there in support of those institutions you have talked about. I am well aware of that, even though I have not read that report. I will start with your Metro points: I agree that Metro, despite some \$30 million community service obligation that the Government pays them every year, still are not able - I am not making this as criticism - to deliver all the services that Tasmanians need, hence, again, a good argument for the Community Transport Trust. The neighbourhood house at Ravenswood, for example, could apply for a bus, together with the local school and another local institution, or three cars, and it could use that to solve some of the transport problems themselves without Metro. That is exactly what I am trying to do with this bit of public policy - that is, create an opportunity for local communities to solve their own transport issues with us providing them with the wherewithal to do that. I am sure in those communities that you represent there will be real opportunities out of that Community Transport Trust.

There will also be real opportunities out of the child and family centres, because I know Launching into Learning in the schools in the area you have talked about is going fantastically well. Launching into Learning is, if you like, the seed or the kernel of what we want to achieve in our child and family centres - that is, bringing in early intervention, early nutrition, early learning, early capacity-building for some of the parents and families, particularly in the communities that you talk about. We know absolutely that in those first four years of those kids' lives they are already disadvantaged when they get to kindergarten versus a kid in a middle-class suburb, for example. Those are the things that we are doing. Those are the things that the Social Inclusion Unit are formulating. But those are the things that we are committed to delivering out in those communities as well.

LINC is another good example. I do not want to go on too much, but adult literacy directly relates to parental capacity and is directly related to early learning outcomes for young kids. So all of those things are either a spiral downwards or a spiral upwards.

**Mr WING** - Mr Premier, do you see this unit having a potential to help establish centres for elderly citizens in areas where they are not available now? They are available in some areas, notably in Abbotsham and there was a centre there established without any government funding by the local council before an amalgamation. In Launceston we do not have one. There are many senior citizens living alone who are lonely and who would really benefit from being able to go to a centre where they could just have a cup of tea or coffee or play indoor bowls or cards, just to have the company, if there were such a centre.

**Mr BARTLETT** - Absolutely. I will ask Mel to speak in a moment, because Mel conducted the full consultation around neighbourhood houses and talked about needs, so I will ask her to talk a bit about that. But, certainly, I do not know whether the right solution is a centre, as such. I go regularly up to Eating with Friends at the Hellenic hall where the elderly people from the Greek community all get together and it is funded through HACC, I think. They have got a bus that was funded from somewhere else that runs around and gets the elderly people out for lunch once a week.

**Mr WING** - That would be a suitable centre to be used part of the time.

[11.15 a.m.]

**Mr BARTLETT** - Absolutely.

**Mr WING** - As long as there is somewhere for them to go.

**Mr BARTLETT** - Absolutely.

**Mr WING** - Almost every day, I think, or every weekday that should be available.

**Mr BARTLETT** - Age is a social inclusion barrier, there is no doubt about it.

**Ms GRAY** - Of the 87 formal written submissions that we received to the social inclusion strategy, many were from seniors groups and numerous local councils. One of the key challenges from a policy-making perspective is ensuring that you do not adopt a one-size-fits-all approach. Professor Adams is really mindful that we capture what is unique about our rural and regional community and our decentralised populations, which is specifically why we took a bottom-up approach to the consultation, being in neighbourhood houses talking directly to people. We tried to make contact with people who are not normally consulted with, for example, people in the minimum security men's and women's prison in Ashley and in Eureka Clubhouse, which is a clubhouse that offers services for people who live with mental illness. We made a real effort to get out. As I said, the policy-making challenge will be to deliver a strategy that captures the diverse needs of a lot of groups and a lot of geographic communities.

**Mr WING** - Thank you.

**CHAIR** - Mr Dean, final question.

**Mr DEAN** - I just want to know what the funding is used for. I will give an example of a northern suburbs community setup where they are going to get the right for a number of buildings from the old Rocherlea primary school when it moves into its new building. They will have

problems funding the removal of those buildings and the setting up of them. Is there funding available through this group for that purpose?

**Mr BARTLETT** - It would be not as such or not in large measure. It would be more a job for the Tasmania Community Fund or another funding source. I do not know whether there are any grants programs or anything like that through the Social Inclusion Unit.

**Ms GRAY** - Not at this stage.

**Mr BARTLETT** - I do not see it as having that role. Its role is really high-level policy and strategy. Its role in the Community Transport Trust was to say, 'We have a need. This is the structure. We will set it up and the money will then flow out the door.'

**CHAIR** - Thank you. That is all in that particular output group, so we will break and then be back at 11.30 a.m.

**The committee suspended from 11.18 a.m. to 11.33. a.m.**

**Output group 2  
Government processes and services**

**2.1 - Management of Executive Government processes -**

**CHAIR** - Welcome back Premier, advisers and members. I think we have pretty much covered Executive government processes this morning -

**Mr WING** - I am not sure whether this comes under that heading, but I wanted to raise the question of transferring government employees to the northern part of the State.

**CHAIR** - I think it could well sit in that area.

**Mr WING** - Thank you. I know your views on that, Mr Premier, and I appreciate them.

**Mr BARTLETT** - I am doing my small bit - in the Education portfolio particularly.

**Mr WING** - Yes, and that is appreciated. One thing that concerned me - and I wrote to you and to the Attorney-General - the advertisement calling for the office of Chief Magistrate had the requirement that that person be based in Hobart, initially if a Hobart magistrate were appointed - and I had no problem with that - but otherwise in Launceston until accommodation could be found in Hobart and then Hobart. That concerned me. It seemed out of keeping with the Supreme Court practice where the Chief Justice himself elected to be based in Launceston. If he can manage the Supreme Court from Launceston, and if the retiring Chief Magistrate has been able to so it for more than a decade - probably 15 years - it seemed a very undesirable provision. I wrote to the Attorney and sent you a copy of that.

**Mr BARTLETT** - Have you had a response from the Attorney-General?

**Mr WING** - Yes, she indicated that she would maintain that stance. That surprised me and it seems out of keeping with the general thrust of government opinion.

**Mr BARTLETT** - Without knowing the reasons for her taking that stance - I think you make a reasonable argument - I cannot comment. I would need to find out what her reasons were.

**Mr WING** - This is out of the Government's control, but it was good to learn that the common services section of Water and Sewerage is to be based in Launceston. It was less welcome to find that the chair of that section is to be based in Hobart, and the first advertisement calling for the appointment of a corporate secretary had a requirement that that office be based in Hobart in the headquarters, as opposed to Launceston.

**Mr BARTLETT** - You should talk to your friends at LGAT about that.

**Mr WING** - Yes, that is right. I hope that your view on this will prevail within government and we will be able to arrest the situation.

**Mr BARTLETT** - I am certainly happy to have a look at the reasons behind any decision, including the magistrates one. As you know, I was very keen to ensure that our new education institutes had one head in Launceston, one in Burnie and one in Hobart. I think that is a pretty reasonable statewide coverage.

**Mr WING** - Yes, and I congratulate you on that. I think that is a very fair statewide approach. I look forward to the Attorney following your great example!

## **2.2 Principal and subordinate legislation -**

**CHAIR** - We will move on to 2.2, which is Principal and subordinate legislation. I have a couple of specific questions in this area. Is the Office of Parliamentary Counsel - or OPC as it is most affectionately known through briefings - adequately resourced?

**Mr BARTLETT** - That is an excellent question. There is always a lot of debate between ministers and the department and OPC about the timeliness or otherwise of legislation. I feel for the Office of Parliamentary Counsel because I think often unfairly people say, 'It's with the OPC and that is why the legislation is delayed'. People tend to forget there is a sort of three-year sausage machine leading up to it getting to OPC and that the timing of legislation often does go across three or four years - from the view to planning to consultation to reconsultation and to actual drafting. When it gets to OPC, it is the bit at the end, and they are often blamed as the bottleneck for not getting legislation into Parliament in time. The secretary and I have had a lot of conversations about how we improve the sausage machine of legislation. During this year we added some extra resource to OPC, particularly when Peter Conway, the head, was on long service leave. We searched high and low to get people into OPC.

It takes a long time to train up a legislative draftsman. These are difficult, detailed and complex jobs and therefore not for everybody. To train up a draftsman to get on to complex legislation is a five-year investment. To shift resources and the capacity of OPC is long-term project. What we have tried to do is deal with the other 90 per cent of the sausage factory that creates legislation to improve those processes because we know that OPC takes a long time to build capacity.

## UNCORRECTED PROOF ISSUE

**CHAIR** - Is there any future plan to expand the number that are working? What is the number, by the way?

**Mr BARTLETT** - At May last year there were 14.3 FTEs and we have increased it by one senior parliamentary counsel. There have also been some variations to part-time employment which have resulted in 15.1 FTEs as of this May. So it has increased, and that is despite some long service leave by Mr Conway and some other things. We are working on improving our processes of getting legislation there. We have put some more money into it but the reality is that even if you put in more money you cannot necessarily get the people with the skills to make the place more productive. You might get a young lawyer who wants to have a career in legislative drafting, but they will not be productive on day one. In fact in some ways they will be anti-productive because they are, in a sense, taking the resource away because skilled people in the office have to train them.

**CHAIR** - Is there very much overtime work as part of the OPC? I know from the Legislative Council there need to be amendments later in the evening to get legislation to pass the House of review.

**Mr BARTLETT** - I am sure there would be a lot of people in OPC working odd and long hours.

**CHAIR** - Do any other members have question in that area?

**Mr WING** - It is surprising that it is difficult to get recruits because it is such an exciting vocation!

*Laughter.*

**Mr BARTLETT** - I was about to say, Mr Wing, that it is not really a career that I feel attracted to for some reason. They are very talented, intelligent and highly-qualified people.

**CHAIR** - Before I leave that area, in this particular output group it also refers in the notes to the *Tasmanian Government Gazette*. I am interested to know whether publishing the *Gazette* online will be considered as a cost-saving measure. Obviously it is an expensive line item.

**Mr BARTLETT** - I understand that we are a year into a three-year contract and cannot change it at the moment, so the first available opportunity to get out of that contract will be in a couple of years' time. You raise a good point which should be considered but of course there will always be a need for a paper version.

**CHAIR** - Obviously there would and I would suggest that we have it online, but if anyone requests it, it can be printed off accordingly - perhaps at a fee. If we are only one year into a three-year contract we have some time to go to make some savings in that area. I don't suppose the contract could be renegotiated?

**Mr BARTLETT** - The sale of the Printing Authority of Tasmania Printlinks was announced 15 December 2007. The ownership of PAT has changed, but the services it provides to government and parliament have not.

[11.45 a.m.]

**CHAIR** - I understand, but obviously that will be flagged for the appropriate department in the future. We will now move on to 2.3, which is the Tasmanian Government Courier.

**2.3 Tasmanian Government Courier -**

**Mr WING** - This is a very good service. A few years ago there was some consideration about pruning it and I am pleased that has not happened because it is a valuable service for everyone. Why don't deliveries in Hobart to Parliament occur until about 11 a.m., whereas the ones in Launceston at Henty House are received at 8.30 a.m.

**Mr BARTLETT** - I might have to take that on notice.

**Mr WING** - I don't expect you to have that at your fingertips, Premier. One of the cost-cutting measures on this item is the withdrawal of mobile phones. I am not sure how that impacts in Hobart - there may be a greater number of staff and always somebody in the office - but in Launceston the couriers are often out and the office is often unattended.

**Mr BARTLETT** - With these savings we will be looking for the non-essentials. Where a person is out on the road, that is part of their job and they need to be in communication, we would not be cutting that.

**Mr WING** - That is good. I am pleased to hear that because that is applying in Launceston and that is seen as a very big disadvantage to the efficiency of the service with nobody in the office much of the time and people often have phoned on the mobile to ask for a collection. Could that be looked at with a view to reinstating mobile phones, at least for the office?

**Mr BARTLETT** - So you are saying that they have been taken away?

**Mr DEAN** - They voluntarily gave up two of their mobile phones as a cost-cutting exercise.

**Mr BARTLETT** - That was good of them.

**Mr WING** - I don't think the Launceston ones were in that voluntary spirit! They may have compulsorily volunteered! Can we have an answer at some time - not today necessarily - about why the delivery is two-and-a-half hours later here than it is in Launceston? Could we also have an indication of other measures that have been taken or are to be taken to effect the reduction in this item?

**CHAIR** - It may have something to do with the reduced prices of the contract.

**Mr REEVE** - We have taken some measures to rearrange the relief arrangements with the couriers in order to achieve these budget strategies.

**Mr WING** - I haven't heard of any other problem, apart from the mobile phone issue in Launceston.

**CHAIR** - Premier, as we discussed in the break, we will come to 2.4 now and I suggest that we look at corporate for ministerial and parliamentary officers and the Office of the Governor as well, and encompass within that Division 16 - Office of the Governor.

**2.4 Corporate support to ministerial and parliamentary offices and the Office of the Governor -**

**Mr DEAN** - I notice from the papers that the additional funding is in the main due to the transferring of security officers across to the Department of Premier and Cabinet from the Department of Justice. How many officers are involved there and does that entail the transfer of those involved in security work at Government House and those involved in any security work -

**Mr BARTLETT** - The item you are referring to - the two gentlemen, John and Tim, who sit at the front of the Executive Building, were previously funded by the Department of Justice. They are now funded by the Department of Premier and Cabinet as the core tenant of that building.

**Mr DEAN** - So it is only two personnel that we are referring to there. I am just interested because you have said the increase primarily reflects a transfer of the funding for those officers. We are looking a reasonably substantial increase in that line item from -

**Mr BARTLETT** - It is \$112 000.

**Mr DEAN** - That picks up those salaries only?

**Mr BARTLETT** - Salary and superannuation - staff costs, yes.

**Mr DEAN** - The position with the redundancy program and where we are going, does it impact on the Office of the Governor at all? Where are we going with that?

**Mr BARTLETT** - I will hand over to the official secretary to talk a bit about savings but certainly Government House is doing their best and looking for savings.

**Ms PARKER** - We are not at the moment looking at savings through redundancies. We are a very small staff and we are a fairly lean operation as it is. So we are looking for savings mainly through goods and services, procurement and through the use of less casual staff, because we do use quite a few casual staff for events and in preparing for events. So having our staff take on more of a role than they have before. We are lucky that we have a very flexible staff who are coming to the party without any fuss at all.

**Mr DEAN** - That is all I have.

**CHAIR** - Any other members with questions? This is just a comment really. I was fortunate to attend the function last Thursday evening at Government House. It is an absolute credit the way the staff do conduct themselves. I believe that the people of Tasmania are very well served by the Governor and his wonderful wife and also by the way that the staff carry out their duties.

**Ms PARKER** - We have a staff that is devoted to the Office of the Governor and an extremely hard-working Governor and spouse. It does not get much better than that, as far as I am concerned.

**CHAIR** - That is right. Have the Governor's visits around the State increased?

## UNCORRECTED PROOF ISSUE

**Ms PARKER** - They have indeed. I have some statistics. There have been 266 external visits this year, which is up from 175 last year. He has made 16 municipal visits, so formal visits to municipalities where there is a municipal reception and he goes to visit different industries and schools, hospitals and such like that in that municipality to get a good understanding of the issues within the municipality. He has made 16 visits to schools outside Government House and we have had school visits come to Government House as well, as we always have. He has made a particular point of using all of these visits as a venue to educate people about the role of the Governor. A lot of people have a reasonable understanding of the ceremonial aspects of the Governor's position but not of his constitutional role. So he has been using those visits for joint purposes, and one of those is to educate the community.

**CHAIR** - When Madam President presents at Government House for legislation that has been passed, I know that the Governor takes a very active role in looking over the legislation and how that will impact on the people of Tasmania.

**Ms PARKER** - He does.

**Mr FINCH** - The President has to debate it again.

**CHAIR** - I have heard that it has taken some time, and I think she has arrived back at Parliament House with some legislation not approved - more work to do. I think that shows a healthy part of the Governor's role. I am sure we all appreciate that role. I take this opportunity to congratulate all that is happening at Government House. I noted from last year's *Hansard* that there was some discussion about changing the open day of Government House. Has that happened or are we staying?

**Ms PARKER** - We did change the open day. We decided to have it in November this year. One of the reasons was that we thought we would cut down on the use of water because having it in March on the same year we use an enormous amount of water trying to keep the garden up to scratch. While, yes, that is true and we have reduced water usage over the year as a whole, we had far fewer people this year in November. I think open day has sort of bottomed out, levelled out. Some people come back; some will not. So we cannot expect huge numbers at open day any longer. That might be an area where we actually think about cutting them back for a while, given our economic constraints and given it costs about \$10 000 to put open day on, and let numbers build up again.

**CHAIR** - Do it biennially rather than annually?

**Ms PARKER** - Yes, that is a possibility, especially at present when we probably have more important things to spend our money on, including maintaining an ageing building.

**CHAIR** - That will always be a challenge. Are there any significant undertakings at the moment?

**Ms PARKER** - Not at the moment. Our biggest undertaking this year was that we replaced all the underfloor heating. Our underfloor heating was 17 years old, and all of a sudden it started to develop hot spots which was very worrying. Once we were on notice that that was occurring, we had to turn it off and replace the underfloor heating. That cost in the vicinity of \$120 000 having all the carpets taken up, replacing the heating and putting all the carpets back down. It was quite a logistical nightmare but it worked really well. It was something that we could not

avoid. Once that is out of the way, that is a good one to have done. Apart from the cyclical maintenance that we keep up, we do not have any major projects at present.

**Mr DEAN** - Have there been any security breaches over at Government House this current year?

**Ms PARKER** - No serious security breaches. I mean, you get any number of tourists wandering in or people who may have forgotten to take their medication and be under the illusion they are the Governor, but nothing that we have not been able to handle very easily. We are very lucky in that regard. It is not something we take lightly, but we have not had any serious breaches.

**CHAIR** - If there are no other questions, we thank you for coming this morning. Premier, if you have nothing to add, we are happy to move on to the next output group. Thank you.

**Mr FINCH** - So we have not had anybody roaming around Parliament House assuming they are the Premier?

*Laughter.*

**Mr BARTLETT** - Just the one. If I can go back to the question regarding the courier service. I am informed that mail is delivered to Parliament House at 9 a.m. each morning. It is collected by the attendants and then distributed according to their schedule. Further deliveries occur at 10.30 a.m. and 11.30 a.m.

**Mr WING** - Very interesting, thank you.

**CHAIR** - Thank you for following that up. The last area of this particular output group is 2.5 Representation in Canberra.

## **2.5 Representation in Canberra -**

**CHAIR** - My question is brief: Is this a cost-cutting measure?

**Mr BARTLETT** - Yes.

**CHAIR** - Thank you. It obviously was not delivering the outcomes that were envisaged at the beginning?

**Mr BARTLETT** - I would couch it in these terms. I think it was a good idea and it did deliver for Tasmania over a number of years. One reason is that there has been a change of government in Canberra, and the Prime Minister himself, I think, has dramatically shifted intergovernmental relations in Australia in a very short period of time.

**CHAIR** - He has given you his mobile phone number?

**Mr BARTLETT** - Yes. Certainly he has dramatically shifted intergovernmental financial relations and what he would describe as cooperative federalism - and I would too - through the COAG process, which is vastly different from what it was previously. Therefore, some of the operations carried out by the Canberra office were no longer required.

**CHAIR** - How much did it cost to close the office?

**Mr BARTLETT** - We got a consultant's review done.

**CHAIR** - What about the staff component?

**Mr BARTLETT** - The staffer's contract expires 30 June this year, and the manager resigned.

**CHAIR** - Thank you. If there are no other questions in that area, that is the quickest output group we have done so far today. Everybody must have got the message that we could be here until 10 p.m. tonight. We will now move on to Output group 3.

[12.00 p.m.]

**Output group 3**

**Electronic services for Government agencies and the community**

**3.1 Information and communications technology (ICT) policy -**

**Mr GAFFNEY** - It is appreciated that ICT is very important to Tasmania's future national and international market. Along with general reduction in advertising overheads, the cessation of funding for the IT transformation project which has enabled a \$450 million saving, can you explain the outcomes of that project and encapsulate the success or otherwise for the benefit of members?

**Mr BARTLETT** - While Rebekah Burton, Deputy Secretary of DPAC, is looking for a note on that, I will say that there are some ins and outs in output group 3.1. It includes the Tasmanian Electronic Commerce Centre grant of \$350 000, which is a \$1 million grant of \$350 000 each year for three years. There is no continuation of the one-off IT transformation project, and I will talk a bit about that in a moment. It also includes some consultants' fees on an IT strategic plan.

The IT transformation project was a project of \$500 000 included in last year's budget as a one-off. Through that project the Government has aimed to progressively become a leader in the use of information technology, which is largely about increasing productivity and at the same time transforming the delivery of services to the Tasmanian public - so internal productivity gains and external service delivery gains. What we are endeavouring to do is become more effective and efficient, more agile and responsive, more accessible, easier to deal with and less vulnerable to external factors. We are planning for greater consistency of the various IT platforms that Government makes use of. We still have the case, and this is a particular thrust of mine, where different agencies use different e-mail systems and different platforms to run their standard systems, but we are moving much closer towards a standardised platform across the whole of government.

One of the outcomes of examining new technologies through this project was the video conferencing cameras that are now on every PC in DPAC, allowing people to cut down on travel costs and presumably carbon emissions as well. The project was effectively revisiting the way that IT is managed within government, the governance structures around information technology. You could describe it at the moment as a series of fiefdoms in each of the agencies and therefore with a lower level of overall governance that might be applied in a modern organisation.

More specifically, the IT transformation project as a first step has developed an ICT strategic plan. I think the best way of describing these sorts of things, particularly to someone like you, mayor, is as a town plan for information technology and systems. It is literally like a town plan or an architecture plan that says, 'What we need for the future is this style of systems, this sort of interconnectivity between them, this sort of infrastructure that supports those systems and where they live, how they are managed,' and all those sorts of things. So we have done that. We have identified an organisational change required to underpin the implementation of the IT strategic plan. It has also progressed and evaluated the use of some specific technologies, as I mentioned before, such as the office communication server product to examine the potential of real-time video conferencing on all PCs and so on. The project developed and evaluated a website portal to support secure access to government information capable of contemporary collaboration activities with a particular focus on whole of government, which is again about people being able to work collaboratively together using information technology. The IT strategic plan has been received by me, and I will be taking it to Cabinet in the coming weeks.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - My last question is in relation to the National Broadband Network rollout, and I am not sure if this is the right place: How is that going to impact and when is it going to be rolled out? We know it is important to Tasmania and especially to the eyes of Australia and the parts of the world looking at it.

**Mr BARTLETT** - You better start your timer, Madam Chair. I have a bit to say about this. I think the National Broadband Network, and we will work towards helping Tasmanians understand this, will be as transformative for Tasmania for the next five decades as Hydro industrialisation was for the five middle decades of last century. It is that important in my view. Just to put it in context, Japan and South Korea are currently the nations on earth who have the most optic fibre to the premises proliferation at some 38 to 40 per cent.

Our submission to the National Broadband Network project, which the Prime Minister and Senator Conroy both praised as the best submission of all the nation - that is why Tasmania was selected as the first place for hundreds of millions of dollars of investment in rollout - was based on providing fibre to some 85 to 90 per cent of Tasmanian premises. That is in schools, hospitals and houses etc, and with the remaining 10 to 15 per cent covered by high-speed wireless access. So 100 per cent coverage to the premises.

It is based on the model that we have been trialling using a number of initiatives that we have invested in since David Crean was Treasurer. We have invested in optic fibre in gas trenches. We have invested in optic fibre through our electricity utilities Transend, Hydro and Aurora. We have invested in what was called TasCOLT, a collaborative optical link trial, which was essentially the first trial of its type in Australia that took optic fibre to the premises in what is described as a brownfield site. It is easy to do greenfield sites where you build a new building and you stick optic fibre in it. But in a suburb like South Hobart that has heritage issues - Devonport was also part of that trial - street issues and all the rest of it, we have successfully completed the TasCOLT project that showed us all the pitfalls, hurdles and so on. It gave us the technologies, the skills and the knowledge to complete this rollout, which of course was fed into our NBN trial. This really goes back to the strategic direction by David Crean to invest in optic fibre.

All of that investment together with the trial and together with the budget that is here today, which is a \$12.7 million investment in equity into Aurora essentially to get their assets up to the speed we need, \$1 million for our own legal and project management costs and \$1 million in our

partnership with the university for the Tasmanian Electronic Commerce Centre - all of those things coming together allow us now to be on the precipice of signing off on what will be hundreds of millions of dollars of investment in optic fibre leapfrogging Tasmania not only above every other State in the country but also every other nation on the planet. As I said, Japan and Korea being the most prolific at the moment with 38 to 40 per cent fibre optic to the premises proliferation and with us within four years going to 85 to 90 per cent. That is how significant it is.

**Mr WING** - A very visionary decision by David Crean. Did he have any advice from anybody in particular with expertise in this area?

**Mr BARTLETT** - As you know, David Crean has a brain the size of a planet on many occasions. Sometimes he took advice and sometimes he did not.

**Mr WING** - He obviously did on this one.

**Mr BARTLETT** - I should also recognise that Martin Wallace, who was my predecessor in David Crean's office, had an enormous amount to do with this - and still does because he is for his sins working for Aurora now and managing this project for Aurora. I would refer you back to 1999 when a few of us who are in this room - Rebekah, myself when I was working for the Department of Economic Development, Rhys - as well as Martin Wallace and others held a planning session about what we wanted to achieve in terms of a competitive telecommunications market in Tasmania. We were all in different roles at the time.

**Ms BURTON** - And much younger then.

**Mr BARTLETT** - And much younger and had considerably more hair in my case. I remember that we very clearly whiteboarded a scenario - everyone thinks this is an overnight sensation but it has actually been 10 years of work to get us to this point which is I think an extremely exciting point.

**Mr WING** - Very good.

**CHAIR** - I have one question about recruitment strategies, because obviously it will take appropriately skilled expertise to be able to be engaged for a project like this. Have you got any recruitment strategies and will you be looking internationally?

**Mr BARTLETT** - The strategies will be undertaken effectively by our partner Aurora, who will be responsible for the rollout. We are working with the Commonwealth now on dotting the i's and crossing the t's on the agreement that will make that happen and see some money flow in the first towns having optic fibre arrive at. Aurora has built the skills within the company but obviously with this scale of rollout we will need to be looking at the skills externally available to it through a wide variety of commercial partners. The skills required include everything from trench-digging to cable-slinging to project management to the very high-end network management. When the Prime Minister and I announced this we watched a guy polish the end of some optic fibre because when you connect it together there is a special way of polishing the end of it so it doesn't lose any light, so there are skills right down to those optic fibre polishers that will be required. We are talking about hundreds of millions of dollars of investment - \$500 million-plus - in this, and this will create a lot of jobs across a very broad spectrum.

### **3.2 Management and ongoing development of Service Tasmania -**

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**CHAIR** - Are there any more Service Tasmania outlets planned for the communities of Tasmania?

**Mr BARTLETT** - I am always open to talk about these things and obviously they are all affected by the factor of cost versus efficiency. There is not much point spending \$1 million to open a new Service Tasmania shop if it only does three transactions through the door all week. We have focused strategically on the online and over-the-phone service delivery - that is, lowest cost per transaction - and that is how an increasing majority of people are doing their transactions.

**CHAIR** - You lost a few customers last year in that area.

**Mr BARTLETT** - I might ask Rebekah to answer that in more detail.

**Ms BURTON** - In relation to the number of shops, with the opening of the Kingston shop in 2007 there are now 27 shops and, as the Premier has said, there is no funding at this stage for any further Service Tasmania shops.

**Mr DEAN** - Not even in the northern suburbs?

**Ms BURTON** - Not even in the northern suburbs at this stage, Mr Dean.

**CHAIR** - But she said it very tentatively, so there's always hope.

*Laughter.*

**Ms BURTON** - I did, but I would draw your attention to the fact that the Queenstown shop will be moving into the LINC, so I wouldn't want to make any comment about further LINC's but obviously there are opportunities -

**Mr BARTLETT** - At Scottsdale, George Town, Sorell, Queenstown.

**Ms BURTON** - Even the northern suburbs of Launceston, potentially.

**Mr WING** - It sounds as if two municipal areas have missed out for only 27.

*Laughter.*

**Ms BURTON** - In relation to the Service Tasmania shops, you asked about the reduction.

**CHAIR** - Loss of customers.

**Ms BURTON** - That was in relation to performance indicators, I think; bill payment services, so as the Premier suggested, you can pay your bills over the phone or Internet. Since its inception Service Tasmania has provided telephone and Internet bill payment services and these were initially provided under a contract between Telstra and the Tasmanian Government and we had the majority of councils delivering their services using that contract. When the contract expired there was a renegotiation, the Government went out to tender and the successful tenderer was Westpac. This is the capitalist system at work at its best. At the time of that contractual change and the transition to Westpac, a number of other suppliers who were unsuccessful respondents to

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the whole government banking tender were very active in the marketplace and they lured away a number of councils from the government contract, so I guess it's a good-news story in that government stepped in and enabled those services to be provided. Those services are now provided and we can't use them in our performance indicators but in effect there has been no diminution in service to customers who want to pay over the phone or online. I think it was another bank that slipped in and undercut the successful government tenderer - and I notice Mr Gaffney smiling.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - I was just going to say 'Which bank?'

*Laughter.*

**Ms BURTON** - Well, yes - thank you.

[12.15 p.m.]

**CHAIR** - That leads me into the services provided over the counter. Two of my colleagues here would see the line every day at Henty House and obviously that number has increased the services provided at the counter from 500 to 550 but there doesn't appear to have been the staffing numbers. What is your department doing in that area to help with the staffing numbers? I know only last week at Rosny there was a line-up outside the door, so it's not just in Launceston.

**Ms BURTON** - I have to say that the Service Tasmania staff do a fabulous job, and I know some of the members here have acknowledged that in the past. It hasn't been an easy year. We have had the introduction of new technology and there are well-documented difficulties around that introduction. The staff really responded to the change we have worked through most of the defects and bugs with that system which, I should add, often happens with new systems, particularly when you're putting in a whole new platform. In relation to the lines you often see, they're usually at peak load times, so everyone goes at lunchtime to pay their bills and it's not something you can overcome just by putting more and more people behind the counter, it's about trying to get people to use the phone to pay their bills, it's about trying to get channel-shift and that isn't always effective. We will never get rid of all the queues but there are issues in certain shops and I recognise that the Launceston shop has been a bone of contention in this forum over the years; in fact it was raised last year -

**Mr DEAN** - That's only because we've got to walk through it every time we go downstairs and we get killed every time!

**Mr FINCH** - They won't let us through the queue - they bail us up!

**Ms BURTON** - I understand that late last year it was particularly bad. We have done a number of things since the last Estimates briefing you obtained. We have replaced the counter and have tried to make as streamlined and efficient as possible the movement of customers through the shop. There is better signage and clearer directions, because you know yourself if you go into a Service Tasmania shop that you don't always want to pay something; you might want some information, and we have tried to do that streaming. We have also put a lot of effort into improving the technology and upgrading the computers that customers use for driver knowledge testing. There has been a big shift with the novice driver initiatives and there is a lot more people in the shops and that's great for people but not necessarily in terms of waiting times. We have also had some business process improvements. For motor traders in particular, that work is being outsourced to smaller shops to help reduce the impact on Launceston. We have

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received one formal customer complaint in relation to Launceston in the last six months, which is a good sign, but I don't step back from the issue that there is a lot of pressure on that shop - it's a really busy shop.

**Mr FINCH** - When there's a long weekend and if there's a holiday Monday, people then squeeze up their visits to Service Tasmania and that's when I generally find that the queues occur - on the shorter weeks.

**Ms BURTON** - Yes, and we find that people have that problem in other shops. Glenorchy is another shop where at certain times there'll be an absolute rush of people, and throwing more people at the counter won't help that. We do have signs up telling people to use the phone if you want to pay a bill, but people like to pay in cash. It is a significant issue and that's why while we're very keen to help channel-shift we can't force it.

**CHAIR** - With the reduction in budget allocation, then, how are you going to continue to address the issues?

**Ms BURTON** - In responding to the budget allocation, I'd like to draw your attention to the fact that the decline in the budget reflects two factors. One is certainly the budget management savings being imposed across government and that accounts for about half of that reduction. The other is the impact of the revised funding model. It is quite complex and I'm conscious of the time -

**Mr BARTLETT** - We talked a bit about this in the overview and the ins and outs and one of the outs was sending money from DPAC back to other agencies.

**Ms BURTON** - What we're trying to do is get agencies to pay for transactions according to how long they are; effectively to put pressure on agencies to make their processes more efficient, so half of that amount of reduction actually appears under the revenue item, so it's not in effect a reduction in funding, it's just a shift - it goes from an expense to a revenue. But half of that amount is budget management saving and it will be difficult. Service Tasmania is about those customer service officers in the shops, and there are no biscuits in their tearooms so it is going to be difficult and there is going to have to be a concerted effort to attempt to achieve those savings.

**Mr BARTLETT** - I have talked about quarantining frontline education, health and police, and while there is not a strict quarantine on the Budget I have expressed to Rebekah that there is a quarantine on the service levels and therefore we will be doing everything possible to maintain the service levels. We will be looking proactively through the year at whether these savings do start to affect Service Tasmania and if so we will be taking some sort of restorative action.

**Mr DEAN** - Regarding the number of client contacts provided at Launceston and comparing that with Hobart, I don't have the numbers for this year but it was shown previously that Launceston had more transactions than Hobart at one stage and with less staff.

**Mr BARTLETT** - Launceston is the busiest shop in the State, I can tell you, so you're not wrong.

**Mr DEAN** - With that in mind - and I don't want to be parochial about this - that brings me to the question as to why we can't do more about that.

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**Mr BARTLETT** - There are three Launcestonians on this committee and two other northerners.

**Mr DEAN** - Premier, at the last budget Estimates session there was a vacant building across the street that was available and there was an undertaking given that that would be considered. I don't know whether it was considered or not but it is now being used by the water and sewerage board as I understand it.

**Mr BARTLETT** - We are locked into a contract in Henty House.

**Mr DEAN** - When does that contract finish?

**Ms BURTON** - Nine years.

**Mr DEAN** - So Premier, we now have to put up with this at Launceston for the next nine years. We know it's overloaded now and the need for service is greater there, so for the next nine years are we locked into that place? You can't make it bigger; there is only a certain amount of room there. You have done well in that regard and we thank you for that, it has helped them, but -

**Mr BARTLETT** - I guess the solution is to find another tenant so we can get out of our contract of nine years and go somewhere else.

**Mr FINCH** - Or put an outpost in the northern suburbs.

**Mr DEAN** - Yes, that's the other option.

**Mr BARTLETT** - Well, I certainly wouldn't rule that out, and I said that at last year's committee as well. Essentially, though, we're in a budget situation that hasn't allowed us to expand, but I wouldn't rule it out for the future.

**Mr DEAN** - At every opportunity I commend the staff there; they're absolutely superb, there's no doubt about that, and they work their fingers off, as it were.

**CHAIR** - It must be difficult looking up and seeing those lines never diminish.

**Ms BURTON** - I think it must get very dispiriting.

**CHAIR** - Premier, that brings me to the question about the LINC. You indicated that there will be Service Tasmania shops or services in LINC's. The Dorset - Scottsdale - service centre and the new LINC proposal is fantastic, but what happens? Do you find another building and start there?

**Mr BARTLETT** - Let me explain. I don't think any one LINC will look identical to another, so the model we're working from is the Huon LINC because that is the one we've established that is highly successful. That LINC has a branch of the State Library, an online access centre, Adult Education classrooms, adult literacy services, polytechnic and academy courses being delivered there, a Service Tasmania shop, a Centrelink office, a Magistrate's Court and some local government bill-paying services as well. That does not necessarily mean that the Scottsdale LINC will look like that; it will largely depend on what the community wants in that shop and what else is already in the community that could be moved in there or doesn't make sense to move there.

But those are the sorts of core services you might see under one roof in the Scottsdale LINC, as you might in the George Town and Sorell LINC.

**CHAIR** - Has that initial work been done on the LINC that have been announced to date?

**Mr BARTLETT** - The best time to ask that question is when we get to output group 3 in Education because that is where the work is being done, through Siobhan Gaskell and the Community Knowledge Network. There is a specific officer in the agency who is going around and bringing together the community groups and so on to work through what they might look like.

### **3.3 Management of TASINET and Networking Tasmania -**

**Mr FINCH** - Premier, I notice in the expenses by output that here we see the usual and, I believe, necessary cuts in the present economic climate, except for management of TASINET and Networking Tasmania and information systems management. Could you comment on that?

**Mr BARTLETT** - I will give you the ins and outs to start with. There has been an increase in TASINET customers, both fixed and mobile, so more people have handsets. There have been revised billing arrangements for Networking Tasmania, so some core services previously paid directly by customers to suppliers like Telstra, for example, are now paid to TMD and passed on to the supplier. The introduction of TASINET to the Mersey Community Hospital has also accounted for some of the new fixed and mobile handsets.

**Ms BURTON** - An important thing to remember with 3.3 and 3.4 is that they operate on a commercial basis so there is absolutely no consolidated funding that goes into these outputs. It's about money that is effectively earned and then paid to Telstra and Optus for phones and data services. So TMD operates off-budget on a commercial basis and recovers all expenditure incurred by invoicing agencies and organisations for the services it provides, so cost-cutting would have no impact on the Government's bottom line and that is why you don't see the same sorts of budget management strategies here that you see elsewhere in government. In terms of the work it does, there will be an impact because, as you know, budget management strategies are dictating a reduction in communications expenditure and that will feed through to these outputs so you will see some reductions that will be forced on TMD to take account of the mobile phones that are handed in. Mr Wing talked about two mobile phones and maybe not those two but other services will be discontinued, so there's a sort of down-the-line impact. That's why this looks a little at odds with the other outputs you have seen today.

**Mr FINCH** - I want to move away from the phone situation. I'm not scooting ahead to Education but I want to look at the new polytechnics. I am informed that since secondary colleges will become part of polytechnic campuses their computer services have entered a disaster zone - that's how it has been described to me. There are long waits and lack of access. Is there a response to that?

**Mr BARTLETT** - Well, a better time to raise that would be when we get to Education but I am happy to give you an overview. I think 'disaster zone' is a bit harsh, to be honest. In fact I know from my own background that bringing together nine campuses in a short period of time to operate on disparate systems, two different enrolment systems, a whole range of things, is an extremely complex task and I think the shared services unit in the Polytechnic and the IT area did a very good job in doing that. But they would say themselves that not all the services available to teachers in some areas were available on day one as they switched on. I can only go on what the

committee was told yesterday by the CEOs of the two organisations who said that significant improvement had been made. I would also add this: I think we need a significant investment in information technology systems across the new institutions to get them to the level that I want to see in student administration and, more to the point, in teaching and learning.

The truth of the matter is that there is nothing really different in the systems that were out there operating in colleges and in TAFE campuses from last year to this year; partly it is about finding something that is wrong and partly it is about trying to bring old systems together with new systems and the normal migration issues. I am happy to explore that further when we get to that output.

[12.30 p.m.]

**Mr FINCH** - Yes, quite a few of my questions were about what is happening in the Polytechnic.

**Mr BARTLETT** - TMD would have very little to do with that, other than they might sell some telecommunications services through the Network in Tasmania contract which is essentially Telstra services in telecommunications.

**Mr FINCH** - This question too is probably going over ground that you have covered before about the National Broadband Network, but can you give Tasmanians in rural areas an assurance that they will have access to broadband when the national and other schemes are rolled out.

**Mr BARTLETT** - I can give you an assurance that at the completion of the rollout of the National Broadband Network in Tasmania a far greater proportion of Tasmanians will have access to the best broadband in the world than any other place on the planet.

**Mr FINCH** - That is a good assurance, because there are a lot of people in smaller rural communities particularly who are so disadvantaged at the moment.

**Mr BARTLETT** - Absolutely. I have said it plenty of times, and I have been quoted plenty of times so the journalists in the room don't have to rewrite it, but I have said that I don't think Telstra has been a friend to Tasmania and that is not denigrating the people who work for Telstra in Tasmania because most of them are my friends - I used to work with them there. They do a great job, but when the privatisation and the deregulation of telecommunications happened in Australia, it did not favour Tasmania.

### **3.4 Information systems management -**

**Mr FINCH** - Again there is an increase here. I assume it will be a similar explanation to the one we had before, so I won't pursue that. Can you just talk about the business activities that have led to an increase in this area?

**Ms BURTON** - Yes. Once again this is off-budget, so these are services provided by TMD to the rest of government and the increases relate principally to increased software costs. All the services you use when you use your computer are underpinned by a whole range of different software applications. For example, Oracle software costs have increased significantly; VMware, which the Premier would be much better at describing than I am, is about making more efficient use of servers; and Suffix, which is another software application. Those costs have increased, and also increases in depreciation have occurred under this item and also there has been a reallocation

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of costs from 3.3 to 3.4. The business activities are really about the increasing costs and also the revenue comes in from government agencies, so it is balanced. There is no impact on the Consolidated Fund.

**Mr FINCH** - You were talking before about the technology in respect of camera being used and videoconferencing. Tell me the part that Skype might play in this.

**Mr BARTLETT** - This is an excellent question. Effectively what we were talking about there is a proprietary bit of software and a camera that is used internally with particular security bits. Skype of course is free off the Internet and can be used if you have a camera on your TV. I think it will be really significant when all the mums and dads in Tasmania work out how transitive the National Broadband Network is as they will when they realise that they can have free phone calls, free Skype calls, free videoconferencing calls out of their living rooms and so on. I know that my kids, for example, Skype with their nanna in Launceston. That will happen more and more and it will transform people's lives. More particularly because of the costs associated with them.

**Mr FINCH** - Another question in respect of employees in this division in this area. What sort of numbers are we looking at, and will there be challenges there in respect of reducing the numbers?

**Mr BARTLETT** - In TMD TASINET phone services is 54.9 FTEs, and in TMD Computing Services 25.5. I think the short answer is yes, there will be efficiencies required in those areas and yes, they may be through voluntary redundancy, early retirement or vacancy control.

**Mr FINCH** - Just on that point: we are looking at a reduction of 800 people, but are we going to have a report from government on that about how that situation is tracking?

**Mr BARTLETT** - Yes, you will get a full report on it because in the mid-year financial report we will have to clearly show how we are tracking against those savings.

**CHAIR** - One last question in this output group 3.3, Mr Finch.

**Mr DEAN** - Are we making the greatest use of TASINET that is available to us? It seems to me that there are officers around who are not using the internal system and going to the external system. Is that impacting at all? What are we doing to ensure that people employed within the State Service are making the greatest use of that?

**Ms BURTON** - One of the projects that TMD has undertaken in the last 10 years is to get everyone under that umbrella, because you are right, Mr Dean, to get the best discounts from Telstra, it is an economy of scale issue - the more services you have, the better the price. We have a good arrangement with Telstra for TASINET. The Premier mentioned Mersey Community Hospital, which was on a cheap and cheerful Dick Smith system that was about to fall over. They moved to TASINET. I think the answer is that Tasinet does go out and proselytise - 'Yes, you should be with TASINET' - but it is also down to individual agencies or schools. The list is very extensive of agencies that use TASINET. TMD because it survives by selling its services is out there trying to sell. I think the answer to your question is 'as much as possible', but, as always, it is up to consumer choice.

### Output Group 4

**State Service management**

**Mr DEAN** - You have said, Premier, that in this regard with the redundancies and the savings that you are looking for right across the whole of the public service sector that you have quarantined frontline services from that strategy. The feedback that I am getting from some of these organisations that it cannot possibly happen without impact on frontline services. I guess the police service is a good example. The State Service positions that may become redundant or done away with will entail, perhaps, police officers picking up those roles. How can you go down the line of ensuring the quarantining of front-line services? I would like to see how it is going to happen. Perhaps you can explain it to me.

**Mr BARTLETT** - The facts of the matter are that you cannot continue to deliver all the services that you were delivering if you have a \$1.5 billion-plus drop in revenues. You just cannot do it while costs are going up in terms of wages - it is impossible. So I agree with you it is not possible to not affect government services across the broad spectrum. What I have said though is that front-line police, front-line health and front-line education services, together with increasing expenditure in infrastructure and capital works because we want to keep the real economy going also and create jobs in the real economy, are this Government's absolute number one priority across government services. Those are the things that State governments are put on the earth to do, in my view. Everything else is important. There is no doubt about it. We cannot say nothing else is important, but they are of second order importance to those three levels of service.

I accept what you are saying - and I take education because I know it well - that schools rely on services from the department to continue to do their work, although through Student at the Centre we have shifted as many resources as we can outside the central department into schools and under the control of principals. But I also accept that if the department is not able to deliver something in the way of curriculum planning, for example, it will have an impact on a school over a period of time. But what I am clearly saying is that teachers, police and nurses, for example, will not be offered redundancies and will not have vacancy control applied to those positions. We will continue to grow our ratios in those areas, as we have over a number of years.

Yes, the Police department, the Education department and the Health department will need to find savings measures, but we will minimise the impact on frontline services. When it comes to policing you would have to ask these in the Police Estimates. I do not want to put words in his mouth. But my conversations with the acting commissioner are that he has already made significant savings during this financial year which have not resulted in massive changes to police services, and he will continue to find savings. The same with John Smyth -

**Mr DEAN** - As I said earlier today, they are required to make those reductions across certain other services. Just to take that further because it concerns me somewhat. I go back to your state of the State address, Premier, where you made that categorical statement that there would be no impact on the frontline services.

**Mr BARTLETT** - That we would quarantine frontline services from budget cuts. That is what we are committed to and that is what we delivered in this Budget.

**Mr DEAN** - And in an answer to a question asked in Parliament by me about two weeks ago, the response came back that there would be minimal impact.

## UNCORRECTED PROOF ISSUE

**Mr BARTLETT** - I said that we would quarantine the budgets of the front-line services. That was my commitment at the beginning of the year; it remains my commitment now; and that is what we have delivered in this budget.

**Mr DEAN** - If we have that 800 and hopefully we will not - we have already gone into that today that it will be much less than that we would hope - have we done a plan or looked at the future to the ramifications of that on the State? We could have 800 employees without a position; we could have a number of those people joining the Centrelink queues; we could have 800 families impacted on by this. Have you looked at the State position of the impact it will have on the State - less salaries, less wages?

[12.45 p.m.]

**Mr BARTLETT** - I will start by putting it in context: You cannot spend what you do not have, and taking this State and the State finances back into debt would be the worst possible outcome. In Tasmania there is a 97 per cent correlation between business confidence and net operating balance in the State finances. It is double the correlation of the next nearest State. So the State finances and the state of the net operating balance in Tasmania has more impact on business confidence in Tasmania than anywhere else in Australia. Hence it is very important.

You have to remember though that these 800 positions are going to be targeted in a number of ways. I have explained one way where they might be funded federally through national partnerships. There will be vacancy control, which means someone voluntarily left presumably either to retire or go to another job or because they have another opportunity. There will be voluntary redundancy where they get a payout so they are not going onto the dole queue straight away and presumably they have other prospects and opportunities to go to; or they are taking early retirement or whatever the case may be. That is why we have structured our cost savings in that way. If you listen to the TCCI, they are saying industry needs skills and we need the skills of these people over this period to invest in. Lastly, I would say it is 800 out of an employment group of 28 000. We have worked assiduously to deal with all the non-employee cost issues before we have gone to employees.

**Mr DEAN** - In 1991 State Service employment was about 21 000. That was a time when the Labor government went through this whole process and reduced it considerably. So from then until now we have had an increase of about 7 000, and you went into that yesterday -

**Mr BARTLETT** - Much of that can be attributed to more police, more nurses and more teachers. I am making it clear not just for this year but for all the time that I happen to be Premier that my priorities are in the frontlines, the important services that State Governments are here to deliver.

**CHAIR** - Another question, Mr Dean?

**Mr DEAN** - I have others but I will let others have a go and then I will come back.

**CHAIR** - We need specific questions on this area because I want to finish this and get on to the next output group.

**Mr DEAN** - In the past we have seen it happen where we have done away with some of these positions and then the organisations or the departments have turned around and re-employed the same people on contracts or in a different way. Can we be sure that is not going to happen?

**Mr BARTLETT** - I will turn to Philip Baker in a moment in terms of some of the rules that will go along with any redundancies, but I would first say that these are bottom-line cost savings that heads of agencies have to find. So there is clear incentive for the heads of agencies to meet these requirements. It would be insane of them to get rid of an admin and clerical level person on \$60 000 a year and then employ them on a consultancy for \$60 000 a year. It is no saving so they would not be doing it. There are some rules that will go along with any voluntary redundancy packages that Philip Baker, who is acting director of PSMO, the Public Sector Management Office, will talk about.

**Mr BAKER** - In the deed of release that the employee is required to sign upon taking a redundancy package, there is a proviso that is a calculation on a prohibition of the re-employment of that employee for a defined period of time up to a maximum of some five years. If an employee takes the maximum package available of 48 weeks, the maximum of that is no re-employment within the State service for a period of five years.

**Mr DEAN** - Right across the State service?

**Mr BAKER** - Yes, across the State service.

**CHAIR** - But if they take a lesser?

**Mr BAKER** - For example, if they were to take 24 weeks, then it would be a prohibition of two and a half years. So it is pro rata-ed down.

**Mr DEAN** - My next question is a hypothetical one: If you cannot find those savings, Premier, is it reasonable to assume that you will be offering greater redundancy packages to make it more attractive for some of these people to leave? Are we going to go down that track if you cannot find those savings?

**Mr BARTLETT** - We believe we can make the savings. If we are not able to make the savings we will have to look for other measures but we believe we can make the savings.

**Mr DEAN** - What are the employment numbers in the Public Sector Management Office? Are they also a part of this proposal?

**Mr BARTLETT** - Like any office they will have to find their efficiency dividend, I am sure. The Public Sector Management Office employs 18.2 FTEs.

**Mr DEAN** - Do you have the number of senior management and a list of salaries within that office?

**CHAIR** - Do you want that document tabled?

**Mr DEAN** - I am happy with whatever is the easiest for your organisation.

**Mr BARTLETT** - We will do that.

**CHAIR** - Any more direct questions?

**Mr DEAN** - Not at this stage.

**CHAIR** - We will be leaving the output group so that will be it. Are you happy with that, Mr Dean?

**Mr DEAN** - Not really.

#### **4.2 Support for the State Service Commissioner -**

**Mr GAFFNEY** - I have two quick questions regarding the State Service Commissioner. Obviously it is a necessary position and funds are stable across the next four or five years. One of the functions of the commission is to investigate alleged breaches of the code of conduct by heads of agencies and to report to the Premier on the result of the investigation. In the last 12 months have there been any alleged breaches of heads of agencies? I am not asking who but how many breaches have there been?

**Mr BARTLETT** - Breaches of what?

**Mr GAFFNEY** - One of the functions is to investigate alleged breaches of the code of conduct by heads of agencies and to report to the Premier on the results of such investigations. Have there been any in the last 12 months?

**Mr BARTLETT** - No, I am advised.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - In 2005 there was a Tasmania State Service employees survey and the second one was completed by December 2007. There is an undertaking to do a survey between July and August of this year. What is the proposed timeline for that report to be completed?

**Mr BARTLETT** - I will ask John Di Falco to come and join us at the table.

**Mr DI FALCO** - The question probably should be answered by the Office of the State Service Commissioner which is a separate office but, as I understand it, the commissioner has decided to defer that survey for a year and to undertake an evaluation in relation to recruitment selection instead.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - Thank you. Could you inform him that he needs to update his website.

**CHAIR** - There you go, some positive feedback.

**Mr DI FALCO** - I will pass that on.

**CHAIR** - One last question from Mr Dean on this output group and then we will head over to output 5.

**Mr DEAN** - Where a redundancy occurs will the job be done away with? There has been an increase in funding in this area and it has been put down to an increase in The Training Consortium. Where are we going with that at a time of looking at cost cutting and redundancies? Why do we need to go down that track?

**Mr BARTLETT** - Doing some extra training?

**Mr DEAN** - The Training Consortium has been identified as the area for the increase occurring to support that project.

**Mr BARTLETT** - The Training Consortium is the unit within the PSMO. I will have to ask Philip Baker to answer this question apart from the fact that I can vouch for what a good job they do. The Training Consortium run the public sector management program, leadership in action, managing policy, heads of agencies and senior executive forums and a practical skills workshop covering performance development, coaching skills etc. I know many agencies use The Training Consortium. It is a whole of government provider offered. It is a broker of services. It simply buys in. Again, it is a post box for the money because agencies are paying for the services.

**Mr BAKER** - It also provides training services to other government agencies such as Commonwealth and local councils as well as training services to the private sector. All services are done on a cost recovery basis. Whilst there is a growth in revenue there is also a growth in expenditure. One offsets the other. There is an anticipation that the services that they provide they will continue to provide and are still warranted in times of economic restraint.

**Mr DEAN** - That is the assurance that we are getting that those extra expenditures will be recovered by the Training Consortium at the end of the day?

**Mr BAKER** - That is our anticipation.

**Mr DEAN** - The other part of that question was: Where the redundancy occurs, will that job absolutely be lost or will somebody else have to pick it up?

**Mr BAKER** - No, the job will be lost.

**CHAIR** - And somebody will pick up the workload.

**Mr DEAN** - Well, that is what I am getting at, and they said, 'No, the workload will go as well.'

**Mr BARTLETT** - Yes, and that's what we were talking about before, that ultimately you can't continue to do the same level of work and services with that significant drop in revenue, so there will be things - and this is the case always in government; the pie is never big enough to do everything. We want a Service Tasmania shop in Ravenswood, which I'd love to deliver, but the pie's not big enough at the minute. So ultimately you make decisions that we won't be doing this or that this year, and as times improve you might add it back on again.

## **Output group 5 Tasmania Together Progress Board**

### **5.1 Support for Tasmania Together Progress Board -**

**CHAIR** - Welcome, Phil, nice to see you.

**Mr HOYSTED** - Thank you, Madam Chair, it's good to be here.

## UNCORRECTED PROOF ISSUE

**CHAIR** - I know when you come to the Legislative Council scrutiny committees people are genuinely pleased to be here.

**Mr BARTLETT** - It was a different table at the House of Assembly yesterday; it was very disappointing.

**Mr HOYSTED** - But I knew we'd get to the table where there was genuine scrutiny - no politics up here.

*Laughter.*

**Mr WING** - So I should ask why aren't there greater cuts in this area?

*Laughter.*

**Mr WING** - No, no.

I understand that the board is approaching its fifth anniversary and there will be a review undertaken as a result of that. Premier, how important do you regard the activities of the Tasmania Together Progress Board in government operations?

**Mr BARTLETT** - I still see Tasmania Together as a very clear guiding light of targets for government and the wider community, and you will see later on today when I give my overview for Education that it's the Tas Together Progress Board targets that we embed into all of our corporate planning in Education and are working towards.

**Mr WING** - The reduction in funding is quite minimal, I think about \$50 000. How is that proposed to be achieved?

**Mr HOYSTED** - I think the most likely scenario is that we won't fill a current job vacancy. Our promotions and communications officer positions haven't been filled and that's the most likely way we'll make that saving.

**Mr WING** - And would that be regarded as one of the 800 redundancies?

**Mr BARTLETT** - It would be regarded as one of the cost-saving measures that will add to the whole quantum of - saving that job could well mean only 799 redundancies, yes.

**Mr WING** - Good - thank you.

**Mr HOYSTED** - I should add, though, that we do in fact have a staff member returning from maternity leave and she'll be able to fill that position part-time so we won't lose it; we'll be able to do that role to some extent.

**Mr WING** - So how many staff are there altogether, with that one returning?

**Mr BARTLETT** - Five, which is reduction from last year of 6.6 due to one promotions officer going part-time and one communications officer departing.

## UNCORRECTED PROOF ISSUE

**CHAIR** - I am mindful of the very kind comments that Phil made to the committee about the scrutinesies so it would be remiss of me not to ask, Premier, given that the level of community awareness for Tas Together is only 47 per cent, are we getting value for money in these hard economic times?

**Mr BARTLETT** - I actually think 47 per cent is quite an incredible number in some ways. We get mixed up in politics all the time of course, but I am always astounded when I go to my electorate and think I've had an absolute shocker or an absolutely great week in politics, and of course my constituents are completely oblivious to what's gone on in my week -

*Laughter.*

[1.00 p.m.]

**Mr BARTLETT** - and therefore getting our wider constituencies engaged in something like this to that level I think is actually a strong achievement. When you think about some of the brands in the world, for example, I think Coca-Cola only has a 93 per cent recognition. I know that's significantly higher than 47 per cent, but to get an understanding of that to that level I think it is actually quite a big number.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - So Premier, you wouldn't be suggesting a compulsory awareness program to increase the percentage, would you?

**Mr BARTLETT** - What, like Guantanamo Bay-style?

*Laughter.*

**Mr GAFFNEY** - I've heard you mention -

**Mr BARTLETT** - Over the last three years the level of community awareness has steadily increased from 41 per cent in 2007 to in fact 53 per cent in 2009, so there are good gains being made as well.

**Mr DEAN** - I want to ask a question that is often put to me. When the progress board looks at these benchmarks and targets that have been set and consider perhaps changing those benchmarks, what is the process they need to go through to do that?

**Mr HOYSTED** - If anybody wants a change to the benchmarks and target indicators they write to the board, the board then runs that through the benchmarking committee to consider those issues and get advice, they then go to the board, the board then releases them for public comment, then they back to the benchmarking committee and back to the board. If there are substantial changes to the benchmarks they have to come to the Parliament, so it's a fairly thorough process.

**CHAIR** - Phil, it's always good to see you; thank you and I'm glad you got to the table.

**Mr HOYSTED** - Well, I didn't waste all my time doing my briefing notes.

*Laughter.*

**Output group 6  
Community Development**

**6.1 Community Development - policy advice and ongoing community development -**

**Mr FINCH** - Premier, on page 10.6 of volume 2 of budget paper 2 it has a paragraph about the output group restructure and consolidation of this area. Can I have an explanation of that consolidation of this output group, please?

**Mr BARTLETT** - I will hand over to Marguerite Scott, the director of the Community Development division in a moment, but simplistically, in previous budgets the Office of Aboriginal Affairs, disabilities, Multicultural Affairs and the Office of Children and Young Persons and so on were listed as separate output groups and now they are collapsed into one, essentially reflecting a strategic move to bring these units together. It's something that I've been keen on and I'll give you a simple reason why, in my mind, anyway. Each of these groups has an administrative overhead and a chunk of money to deliver in services, programs, grants and what-have-you in the delivery of their policy. Having seven little groups, each with administrative overheads and a relatively small pool of funds to deliver services, isn't as efficient and effective as reducing your overall administrative overheads, giving you more flexibility and a larger pool of funds to deliver services with where needed, giving flexibility around different priorities in any given year, for example.

**Mr FINCH** - Has this brought offices and officers together?

**Ms SCOTT** - To some extent. When the division was created in 2006 it was spread over seven locations with a staff of about 60. The local government division has moved back out of it since then. We are trying to move now towards having one location in Hobart; that would be 144 Macquarie Street which is where a large percentage of the groups are now. But really I think one of the reasons the division is trying to do things differently is because we also have small groups of policy officers and they have been assigned (or inside?? 1:05:48) teams of, in some cases, only three or four units because the units are very small, so we've been working together in looking at how we might do things collaboratively. Across the division we provide support to three ministerial councils, a whole myriad of grant programs, we provide resources to two foundations - the Early Years Foundation and the Jim Bacon Foundation - and we provide resources to two NGOs. So there's a whole myriad of things that we do that we could actually do better together and it would give our policy officers the capacity to work collaboratively on some of these things.

We have been working as a staffing group over the last six months trying to work out where we can do that. For example, in the area of grants, we think we can do that better, because only four of the units historically were given money for grants and some of the grant pools are very tiny, like in Multicultural Tasmania where they give out \$900 grants, but if you apply to Women Tasmania you would get much bigger grants. So we are trying to look at how we might do that more equitably, and in a different space, because we were creative a long time before the Social Inclusion Unit, for example, and a lot of the work we do isn't necessarily dictated by whether or not a person is disadvantaged. In the Disability Bureau, yes, in the Office of Aboriginal Affairs, yes, but not always, so we're trying to look at how we can do a lot of those things a lot better and get a better result.

**Mr FINCH** - Thanks. The appropriation estimates, like everything else, progress downwards over the next few years and then in year four you move to \$6.210 million, slightly less than this present year but approximately the same. Is this premature optimism or is there something else there?

**Mr BARTLETT** - I would expect that is just some allocation for growth due to wage policy or something like that, a small increase like that.

**CHAIR** - The recession's over.

**Ms SCOTT** - I don't particularly want to guess. I know every two years, for example, we have a huge difference in terms of what we roll out for the Seniors Card, so we have a quiet year and I'm not sure whether it's that. I don't know, I'm sorry.

**CHAIR** - Can we take that on notice that somebody will get back to us?

**Mr FINCH** - Just some explanation of why that is back up again and what that reflects - apart from your salary raise, Ms Scott.

*Laughter.*

**Mr FINCH** - I want to get onto the subject of assistive technology. Our Joint Standing Committee on Community Development found the provision of assistive technology for people with disabilities in disarray, underfunded and in need of major reform. I want an outline of what steps the State Government is taking regarding the recommendations of the committee.

**Mr BARTLETT** - I am very happy for Marguerite to talk about the Disability Bureau but that output you are seeking to examine there is actually under DHHS. The Disability Bureau has a different job which Marguerite will talk about.

**Ms SCOTT** - Certainly that topic went onto the agenda for the Premier's Disability Advisory Council and I think it preceded your role as premier, Premier. There are two councils; one is the Premier's Disability Advisory Council and there is also a ministerial council and the agenda was merged across exclusively to Health. From my own experience all I can say is that I have heard the Minister for Health at those meetings report on reforms she has made in that area and all I can say to you is that around that table there are quite a lot of feisty advocates for disabilities and they seemed quite happy with the reforms.

**Mr FINCH** - Yes. That doesn't come to your department, though, to discuss that and make recommendations or an assessment of what has occurred in respect of community development?

**Ms SCOTT** - Only that obviously around that table of the Premier's advisory council there are a number of people who could put the matter back on the agenda if they wanted to and they haven't chosen to. If they did our role would be to work to brief the Premier and we would go back to the Department of Health to ask what was happening and then brief the Premier on the basis of that and also include the views that we were hearing from his advisory council. That would be our role.

**Mr FINCH** - Thanks for your guidance as to the pathway.

**CHAIR** - Premier, given that our committee has had a look at grants and subsidies, capital investment programs and special capital investment funds, there are no questions because they are - oh, there is. Sorry, Mr Gaffney.

## UNCORRECTED PROOF ISSUE

**Mr GAFFNEY** - Very quickly, I notice your comment regarding the Social Inclusion Unit. It seems to me there is some synergies between your umbrella and where they're coming from and they've only got a staff of four, so I'm just wondering what conversations and relationships have you developed with that unit and do you see them playing a role in policy? There seems to me to be a relationship that should be there instead of sitting in isolation. What's the plan or have there been any discussions so far about where that might head?

**Ms SCOTT** - Yes, our directorate is on the same floor and in the same space as the Social Inclusion Unit although we run separately, obviously. One of the things we've been trying to do with our grant discussions at staff level - and these haven't been to the Premier yet so I'm speaking about a plan at this stage - is to talk about how our grants could be better organised to deliver. We're waiting to see what the Social Inclusion Commissioner's strategy will be and what the Government's response to that will be but we have been planning for the last 10 months at a staff level about how we can help to deliver from the Community Development division on the social inclusion strategy. We certainly see that as a very high priority into the future.

**CHAIR** - I apologise Mr Gaffney, for not looking up the table. Premier, as I said, there is very detailed and quality information in the budget papers about the investment and subsidies program and the committee has no specific questions on that.

**The committee suspended from 1.13 p.m. to 2.15 p.m.**